

ALETHIA:
OR, A
GENERAL SYSTEM
OF
MORAL TRUTHS,
AND
NATURAL RELIGION;
CONTAINED IN
LETTERS from SELIMA, Empress of
the *Turks*, to her Daughter ISABELLA, of
Grand Cairo:
WITH
CRITICAL and HISTORICAL NOTES.

By RICHARD MURRAY, A.M. & J.U.B.

V o l. II.

*Quid verum atque decens, curo et rogo, et omnis in
hoc sum.* HOR. Epist. I.

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CONTENTS
OF THE
FIRST VOLUME.

LETTER I.

From SELIMA to ISABELLA.

CONTAINS a Representation of the
Dangers to which Youth and bigg Birth
expose Isabella, the Anxiety which the
Mother is under from that Consideration,
and an Account of a remarkable Vision.

LET.

CONTENTS.

LETTER II.

The Mother represents to her Daughter, the Effects which the Vision had upon her, and her Endeavours to get it explained; how she comes to be informed of the Dervise Bedriden and his Character: He undertakes to explain the Vision, and begins with a Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God.

LETTER III.

Selima relates to Isabella, the Dervise's Discourse on the Nature and Immortality of the Soul.

LETTER IV.

She acquaints her Daughter with the Opinion of the Dervise, on the natural Evidence of Virtue and Vice.

LETTER V.

Contains his Discourse on Sensation, and it's Effects upon the human Mind.

LETTER VI.

A Discourse on Pride.

LET-

CONTENTS.

LETTER VII.

On Anger and Envy.

LETTER VIII.

On Ambition and Meanness of Spirit.

LETTER IX.

On Ingratitude and Inhumanity.

LETTER X.

On our Duty to Mankind.

LETTER XI.

On the same.

LETTER XII.

Selima acquaints Isabella with the Indisposition of the old Dervise, and communicates to her a second Vision, with its Explanation.

LETTER XIII.

Contains an Account of the Dervise's Recovery, and his Discourse on Prudence in general.

LET.

CONTENTS.

LETTER XIV.

A Continuation of his Discourse on the same Subject, as applicable to particular Persons and Circumstances.

LETTER XV.

On Prudence, as applicable to the Government of the Passions.

LETTER XVI.

On Justice.

LETTER XVII.

On Love in general.

LETTER XVIII.

On Friendship or social Love, illustrated by the History of Omer and Osmin.

LET-

TER

THE
CONTENTS
OF THE
SECOND VOLUME.

LETTER XIX.

Contains Selima's Account to her Daughter of the Inclination she had to find out the Source of so uncommon a Friendship as that of Omer and Osmin; her Application to the Dervise for Solution of her Scruples, and his Discourse on the Source of Friendship, which he derives from self Love, as the first Spring and Principle of all moral Actions.

LET. XX. Contains the Dervise's Discourse on true Patriotism, or publick Spirit.

LET. XXI. On modern or mock Patriotism.

LET. XXII. On Fidelity and Truth.

LET. XXIII. On the relative Duties.

LET. XXIV. On Fortitude or Magnanimity introduced by the Character of the young banished Sophi of Persia.

LET. XXV. Selima expresses her Surprise at the Magnanimity displayed in the Sophi's

Chā-

CONTENTS.

Character, and apply to the Dervise for an Explanation of the Rise and Principles of that Virtue, who takes Occasion to explain, in general Terms, the Nature of Fortitude. The Letter finishes with a remarkable Sally of female Pride.

LET. XXVI. *The Dervise takes a View of Fortitude in Adversity, and applies it to the Character of the young Sophi; remarks some Counterfeits of the Species of that Virtue; and the Letter concludes with Selima's Remarks upon natural Evils incident to human Life, occasioned by her being attacked by the Head-ach.*

LET. XXVII. *Selima relates to her Daughter, the Remainder of the Dervise's Discourse on Fortitude, which he, in this Letter, considers in high active Life, and as a military Virtue, distinguishing Courage into rational, irrational, habitual, constitutional, and artificial.*

LET. XXVIII. *On Moderation and Temperance.*

LET. XXIX. *Selima acquaints Isabella, that the Dervise Bedriden had finished his Discourses upon our Conduct in Life, and had put into her Hands a Translation of a Fable written by Sebes the Theban Philosopher, which she sends her, as containing a beautiful Picture of human Life in an entertaining Allegory.*

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LETTER XIX.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

MY dear *Isabella*, when the holy Dervise had finished his Narration of the Friendship of *Omer* and *Osmin*, the Evening was too far spent to continue the Conversation; the holy Man left me, and I retired to Rest, full of Wonder and Amazement at the strange and surprising Effects of that seraphick Passion: The more I endeavour'd to account to myself rationally for the Motive and Principles of that amiable Affection of the Soul, the more I was bewilder'd, and the less capable of forming any Judgment of the secret Springs of so uncommon a Passion. When I reflected on the Steadiness of their Affection, and the disinterested Friendship they expressed for each other, I thought it almost impossible that human Nature could come up to that Pitch without Enthusiasm, or super-natural Impulse; but when I considered the Effects of this Friendship, that it cancel'd in *Omer* the first and strongest

est Tie of Society, the nuptial Contract, and induced him to make Shipwreck of the natural Love all Parents have for their Offspring, and yield his innocent Children and faithful Wife to all the Ignominy and Horrors of Slavery ; that it prevail'd on him to throw away his Life, and cease being governed by that universal Law of Nature, Self-preservation : I was unwilling to believe, that the divine Being, whom we represent to ourselves as just, beneficent, and merciful, could contribute to destroy those Bonds of natural Love, and paternal Affection, which he has instituted and implanted in us for the Happiness of Individuals, and the Continuation of the whole Species. I argued with myself, that every Action in which we read the Finger of Providence, or the Hand of the Almighty, has not only Peace, Justice, and Mercy for its Ends, but these Attributes are inseparable from the Means : These Reflections convinced me then, that I must search into human Nature itself for a Principle on which to fix these strange Effects ; and that there must be some latent Spring in the Soul of Man capable of producing the Event I so much admired in the History of *Omer* and *Osmin* : Self-Interest was the only Motive I could think of on which to charge their obstinate Friendship, for there appears

appears through the whole Narration so much Disinterestedness, such strong Marks of Self-denial; that I could not, I thought, with any Justice, trace their remarkable Amity to so foul a Souree. I lost myself in these Meditations; I found I was got into a Maze of Doubts, and a mere Labyrinth of jarring Ideas, out of which my Understanding was not capable of leading me; therefore I composed myself, resoving to lay my Scruples before the holy Dervise, from whom I expected full Satisfaction: Accordingly the next Day I represtented to him my Thoughts on his friendly Narrative, much in the above Terms; when the holy Man, after a short Pause, delivered himself in Words to the following Purport.

Fair Sultana, Delight of *Amurath*, and Joy of the Commander of the Faithful, you judge right in refusing to charge the Acts of *Omer*, which seem to shocck your tender Nature, upon the particular Dispensations of divine Providence. That eternal Mind, who by his general Decrees determines the Actions of the Sons of *Adam*, never interposes his Omnipotence to alter the natural Course of Things, but to answer some great and wise Ends, and then uses Means in no Manner capable of reflecting upon his Attribute of Justice, destructive of the Peace of Society,

ty, or those Bonds he has appointed to unite Individuals, and constitute the Harmony of social Life: No, you must search for that Motive which determined the friendly *Omer* to make Sale of his Wife and Children, and sacrifice his own Existence among the Principles of his Nature, where you may find a Thread to lead you out of that Labyrinth of Thought into which the strange and contradictory Effects of Friendship has entangled you.

Self-Interest has already occurred to you, and however strange it may seem at present to your generous Mind, that a Friendship so unbounded, and seemingly disinterested, should spring from such a selfish Source; yet by it we may unravel the strange Mystery; and from it derive a Motive strong enough to produce all the Effects you so much admire in the History of these generous Friends.

For want of being acquainted with the natural Passions, and acquired Affections that occupy the Soul of Man, we are led sometimes to over-value, and often to under-value the Faculties and natural Abilities of human Nature; and are apt to ascribe to supernatural Influence what is only the Result of natural Causes.

Self-Preservation is allow'd by all Mankind to be the first and strongest Principle in

in human Nature; a Principle of which no Man is ashamed to own himself possessed, or to acknowledge that it gives Spring to all his Actions; but if we change the Term, and speak of Self-Love, or Self-Interest, then the Pride of our Nature recoils, and we disown all Acquaintance with the odious Passion; but this is the Effect of meer Pride and Hypocrisy; for if we judiciously examine the Words Self-Love, Self-Interest, and Self-Preservation, they signify one and the same Thing; and most of us knowingly, and some of us without knowing it, are actuated by nothing else than meer Self-Love, when we think we are least concern'd in the Event of Things.

Self-Love we may define to be a Consciousness of our Existence by some other Means than Pain. Or, the Pleasure we take in contemplating our own Being from a Sense of Happiness. To be conscious of our being only from the Pangs of Pain would be Misery in Abstract, and a State in which all Mankind would rather chuse not to exist at all than continue in; for I think they are all agreed, that it's better not to be than to be unhappy: To be conscious of our Being by the Absence of Pain, is only that Kind of Existence which inanimate Things may be said to enjoy; it's a lazy negative Being, and almost incapable of Consci-

ousness; therefore I have defined Self-Love to be a Consciousness of our Existence by something else than Pain, which something Mankind express by Happiness or Pleasure. Hence the Definition in this Manner illustrated stands thus: ' Self-Love ' is an earnest Desire of the Soul to promote its own Happiness, and to continue and increase its Consciousness of real and desirable Existence; from whence I would conclude, that Self-Love, and Self-Preservation are inseparable; or that Self-Love, and Desire of Pleasure are necessary to real Existence.'

Man in the pure State of Nature exerted this Passion, or Principle of Self-Love without any Manner of Controul; but in that State it was impossible for him to be social, or even to preserve his Existence: Therefore this very Principle of Self-Love, or if you will, Self-Preservation, taught him the Necessity of Society, and of herding with the rest of his Species, as most conducive to the Gratification of the innate Desire of promoting his Happiness. To preserve Society, it was necessary to acquire a new Affection, 'till then unknown in the Soul of Man, called Self-Denial, which is a *refraining from the Enjoyment of certain Things which would afford Pleasure, for the Sake of some Equivalent.*

lent. Self-Denial, in an abstract Sense, without something to counter-balance that Good we abstain from, is a mere Chimera, a Thing which has no Existence in Nature ; it is either voluntary or forced : If voluntary, and we abstain from any Thing of our own free Will, which might bring us real or imaginary Pleasure, it must be for the Sake of something else which we apprehend will be productive of greater Happiness ; otherwise we must suppose, that Man acts from no Principle at all, or is govern'd in his Actions by no rational System. Thus Man abstains from Poisons, however delicons to the Taste, and whatever Gratification they might afford his Appetite, because the indulging himself in that Pleasure would be productive of a greater Evil, and satisfies his Hunger with Aliment, less gratifying to the Palate, because the one supports his Being, and the other destroys it ; yet no Man applauds a Man for being self-den'y'd, because he preferred wholesome Diet to the most high relished Poison in Nature. Again, if this Self-Denial is forced, as when Man denies himself the Pleasure of gratifying his Passions at the Expence of another Man's Person or Property, and refuses to rob his Neighbour, tho' almost starving ; this he does out of Fear that the Laws of Society, of which he is a

Member, would destroy this very Being, for the Preservation of which he desires not to rob: This by no Means deserves the Name of Self-Denial in the abstracted Sense of the Word, nor has less of Self-Love in it than if he had actually cut a Man's Throat to save his Life; therefore Self-Denial is no more than governing the radical Principle of Self-Love by Reason, that is, by Rules which must rationally produce the End desired, viz. Pleasure, and by those Laws which are productive of the Peace and Happiness of Society; but is not in any Measure destructive, or contrary to the Principle of Self-Love; on the contrary, it is the most rational Means to promote the great End of Existence, Pleasure, and Happiness.

From this View of Self-Love, and what has always been esteemed its Contrast, viz. Self-Denial, we may also account, for the Horror most Men conceive at the Notion of acting merely from Self-Love, the Pleasure they take in contemplating Actions they apprehend proceeding from Self-Denial; and at the same Time we discover a Path, which in the Scrutiny of every Action in Life, will lead us to Self-Love, as the Source, Spring, and first Principle.

Man

Man in his own Nature is a Creature made up of Wants, and furnished with Passions and Appetites, from the Gratification of which arises that Pleasure so necessary to his Existence: His natural Wants are many, but those he has acquired by being social are almost infinite; the Sense of his Necessities, natural and acquir'd, and the proneness in our Nature to gratify them without Restraint, occasioned by the Prevalence of Self-Love in our Constitution, has taught Mankind to lay this Principle of Self-Interest under several Restraints, in order to carry on the great Business of Society, without which it is merely impossible for Individuals to subsist. To this Effect they have branded with Ignominy every Appearance of Self-Love, which interferes with the Peace of the Community, and fixed to them Epithets more or less odious, according to the Degree of Mischief they threaten the State, or private Persons. Thus a Man who discovers a more than ordinary Esteem of his own Qualifications, and Contempt of those of his Neighbours, is branded with the Name of proud and haughty, because every Man has such an Opinion and Love of himself, he thinks it an Affront that any other should pretend to a Superiority over him. All Men are possessed more or less of Pride, and

and yet hate it wherever it discovers itself in another, which proceeds only from Self-Love, which would set us paramount over all the Species ; a Claim, which however we might like to establish in our own Favour, yet we cannot with Patience admit another to have any Title to ; therefore he who desires to live peaceably in the Society, must conceal his Pride, and pretend to be humble and self-den'y'd. A Man who takes Pleasure in displaying his Pride and Self-Love, by the gaudy Ornaments of his Person, and the Splendor of his Equipage, as he does not discover so much Pride as the other, by pretending only to excel in Trifles ; this Man is marked with the Epithet of vain and foppish, his Foible is Vanity, a Folly which seldom hurts any Body but himself ; yet gives Offence, as it discovers an inordinate Desire to appear more considerable than the rest of his Neighbours, who fancy themselves much better entitled to that Kind of Preheminence the vain Man claims, than he who makes this gaudy Appearance : But the Man who discovers his Self-Love by an inordinate Desire of Money, and the other good Things of this Life, we brand with a Name more odious to most People than either Pride or Vanity ; we call him selfish, self-interested, and avaricious : This Spirit

Spirit of monopolizing, scraping together, and amassing Wealth and Property by all Means whatever, is so detrimental to Society in general, and every individual Member of it, who are all eager in the same Pursuit, that all Mankind, with one Voice, have agreed to treat the Possessor of it with the utmost Contempt, and to punish them in some Cases with the greatest Severity, and have it so constantly before their Eyes, and live in so much Dread of it, that they have affixed the Meaning of Self-Love almost entirely to Acts which relate to this Kind of Disposition, and define Self-Denial by a Refusal to act from such sordid Principles. Thus the generality of Mankind, when they speak of Self-Love, for the most Part, mean a Man who has Pleasure in nothing else but Money or Property ; and from this Idea of the Word arises that Horror they conceive at being supposed to act from the Principle of Self-Love ; for where this Idea is not annexed, they have found Epithets or Distinctions, which do not create such Compunction in the Possessor. Thus a Man who discovers his Self-Love, or desires to promote his Happiness, by aiming at, and in the Possession of, Places of great Honour, though but little Profit, is not branded with the Epithet of selfish or self-inter-

interested ; we have found a Term less opprobrious to express his Passion, viz. *Ambition* ; nay we may happen to mistake his Meaning so much as to call him disinterested and self-den'y'd, though he only prefers the supreme Delight of Honour and high Command to the more gross Gratification of that mean Passion Avarice : Tho' an ambitious Man is look'd upon with an evil Eye, yet as he does not interfere with the Interest of so many as the sordid, avaricious Wretch, he is treated with greater Tenderness and Respect, and the further our Actions seem to be removed from avaricious or ambitious Views, the nearer we approach to social Virtue, and the greater Share we have of the Esteem of the Society : This has loaded the Patriot with all the Encomiums human Eloquence could invent, because he who acts for the publick Good, is supposed furthest removed from this intoxicating Principle ; but then, notwithstanding all the Rhetorick spent in Praise of publick Spirit and Patriotism, if we could deprive the Pretender to it of the Principle of Self-Love, and deny him Praise for every Part of his Actions which do not arise from that Motive, the Action itself must be a Non-entity, or the Agent must act from Impulse, like the inanimate Creation, and not from rational Induction ;

consequently the Praife due to him would be like an Encomium upon the magnetick Virtue of the Load-Stone, or a Dissertation on the Beauties and Excellence of an enameled Meadow.

For either he conceives, that acting for the Good of the Publick is the best Method of promoting his own Happiness in an interefted Sense, that is, as he is a Member of Society, and must enjoy the Benefit resulting from his Patriotism in common with the rest of his Fellow Subjects; or he is contented with the Pleasure of contemplating his own Worth, and that he has gain'd the Esteem of so many People, by contributing to the publick Good; in either Sense he promotes his own Happiness, the ultimate End of his acting: But in the one Case, the Means he uses to obtain that End serves to gratify some of his Passions; and in the other, he is free from any Mixture of Passion or Appetite, but enjoys the grand End in View without their Mediation. When we say that a Man is actuated by Avarice, or any other Passion on which Mankind have fix'd any odious Character, we cannot suppose that Money, the common Object of that Passion, is the End pursued by the Miser, it is only the Means he uses to promote his Happiness, that is, he fancies to himself that

that the Possession of Money will afford him Pleasure ; on the other Hand, that Man who pursues the Interest of the Publick, without Regard to the Gratification of any Appetite or Passion, does not pursue that publick Good as the ultimate End, but as the Means to procure that grand End of Life, Pleasure and Satisfaction ; so that the Miser and the Patriot have still the same ultimate End, Pleasure and Happiness, and act from the same Motive, *viz.* Self-Love, but differ in the Means : The Pleasure the one is ravished with is convey'd to him by the Mediation of the proper Senses, and the Happiness of the other is purely mental ; yet when each has obtain'd his End, they are equally happy, at least in their own Conceit ; they are equally conscious of their Existence, and measure it by an equal Degree of Happiness ; though they differ so much in the Means used to obtain it, yet they are like two Men, who are both directing their Journey to one City, but take different and contrary Routs, and at last meet. The Miser has much less of the Esteem of Mankind, is more hated, envy'd, and despised than the other, for this Reason, the Means he uses to promote his Happiness, and to gain the grand End of Being ; Pleasure interferes with the Pursuit of the Generality of the Society. Every Man,

at least most Men, have an Opinion, that Money will procure them the greatest Share of Happiness, it can gratify most Passions, and the Bulk of Mankind are so involved in Sense, that they have no Relish for Happiness but that which they enjoy by the Mediation of the Senses ; no Wonder then if they express their Resentment at every Person who interferes with them in Money Matters, since they suppose, that so much as another engrosses of this Pleasure-giving Commodity, just so much is deducted from their promis'd Portion of Happiness. This is the Source of the ill Name self-interested Men have got in the World, and the Reason all wise Men conceal their avaricious Inclinations, since it renders them obnoxious to the Society, and robs them of that Esteem, Peace, and Protection from their Fellow-Subjects, which they promised themselves Happiness and Pleasure from the Enjoyment ; and in the same Manner we may account for that Esteem which the Patriot enjoys ; it is, because in the Pursuit of his Happiness he interferes with no Man's Views ; on the contrary, he promotes their sensual Happiness, and contents himself with pure, mental Pleasure, a Commodity which is too refin'd for the Grots of Mankind to feel or understand, and consequently he can have but few Rivals ;

he

he is like a Man who deals in a trading Commodity, in which none of his Neighbours care to be concern'd, he may deal as largely as he pleases, without Envy or Hatred; but let him fall into a Branch of Trade which most of them get their Bread by, and every Man of them becomes his Enemy.

‘ From what I have said then, fair Sul-tana, you may perceive, that *Omer* and ‘ *Osmin* pursued each their own Happi-ness in their mutual Friendship for one another, but happened both to be of that Class of Men who prefer mental Pleasure to any Thing purchased by the Means of the Passion; not but they might receive Satisfaction in the Possession of Money, in the Enjoyment of their Wives, and Love of their Children; but the Pleasure they took in each other’s Friend-ship was greater than all these Enjoyments; or, in other Words, they apprehended the friendly Union betwixt them, contribut-ed more to their ultimate End, Plea-sure and Happiness, than any of these En-joyments; therefore it’s no more Wonder to see *Osmin* part with his Estate, his Wife, and his Children, to serve his Friend, than if he had given a large Sum of Money for the Purchase of a fine House, a fine Horse, or any other Thing capable of giving Delight

light. The Miser would blame any Man to give a Sequin for a Bottle of Wine, because he places his chief Happiness in the Possession of Money ; and he that bought the Wine thinks him a Fool, that he puts so little Value upon delicious Wine, as to prefer his Dross to the Enjoyment of it. In the same Manner we think *Omer* acted strangely to part with his Wife and Children for his Friend, because we are accustomed to account these as the great Means of our Happiness. But as the Value of every individual Thing is not intrinick to its own Nature, but is received from the Esteem we have of it in our Mind, we have no Reason to be amazed when we see such Exchanges made.

I am aware, that the Sacrifice which *Omer* intended to make of his own Life, may in some Measure stumble your Belief of this kind of Reasoning ; because it may occur to you, that destroying one's Existence cannot be the proper Means to procure Happiness by any rational Creature ; but the Difficulty occurring from that Circumstance of their Friendship arises only from our not attending to what happens almost every Day. We see Men and Women throw away their Lives frequently, and venture them for the Gratification of the Senses, and yet are not surprised

fed, because the Thing is common, and passes without Examination among the ordinary Occurrences of Life. We see the Robber risk his Life every Day for a Trifle; the Mariner plunges himself into all the Dangers of the Deep for the Sake of Riches; the Soldier marches up to the Jaws of Death, and certain Destruction, for Pay or Honour. This we see daily, and are not amaz'd at it; nay, we account them Cowards and slothful who will not, on these and many other Occasions, risk their Lives, and expose them to the most imminent Danger: For what is this Risk run? is it not for Pleasure, or the Means of Happiness? If it is, (as the dullest Mortal must confess) then we are furnished with a thousand Instances where Men lose their Lives for the Sake of, and in order to obtain Happiness. From whence I would conclude, that there is a Species of Happiness which Man prizes above mortal Existence. If Man, for the Sake of momentary, sensual Enjoyment, can be prevail'd on to lose his Life, is there any Wonder that Men should barter it for the pure Pleasures of the Mind, even though they were to be no more permanent than earthly Things? I think there is not; but when we consider Man as an immortal Being, and that his Desire of

Happiness is to continue as long as his never-dying Soul, then we may easily believe, that some Men may value such mental Enjoyments at a much greater Price than their fleeting Breath; since they are sure, when this frail Body is moulder'd into Dust, that Thought, which now gives them Joy, must afford them Ecstasy through all the Ages of Eternity. Thus Men throw away their Lives for the Sake of Fame, believing the Esteem and Reputation of future Ages as the only Means to complete their Happiness; and in the same Manner we may account for *Omer's* Case; he looked upon the Pleasure of reflecting upon the great Friendship he had for *Osmin* as the only Means to compleat his Happiness; and the Joy resulting from that Thought was so transporting, that he confess'd Mortality was incapable of supporting it, and wish'd for his Dissolution, that he might enjoy the heavenly Rapture with all the immortal Faculties of his enlarged Soul. In a Word, all Mankind pursue the same ultimate End, they run the same Race, and point towards the same Goal, but use different Means; they all seek their own Happiness, and pursue that of others only as it contributes to that great End of Existence. Farewel.

Constantinople the 10th
Day of the 1st Moon.

S E L I M A.

LETTER XX.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

MY dear *Isabella*, from what the holy Dervise delivered in his late Discourse upon Friendship, you may judge how difficult it is to trace the Source of human Actions, how various their Appearances, and how intricate the Chain of Causes, that all contribute to promote the same grand End of our Existence, Pleasure. By weak mortal Eyes, without the Aid of divine Reason, how apt are we to be misled, not only in our Conjectures about the Actions of others, but even in forming any Opinion of the Spring and Motives of our own Desires? How strong and prevalent is that Principle of Self-Love in our Nature, and with what rapid Force are we carried along by it, if we allow ourselves to be actuated by the first Motions of our Passions, without the Aid of that Faculty in the Soul call'd Reason, by which she is enabled to distinguish the Fitness of Things, their several Relations to each

other, and judge of Causes and Effects, so as to be able to make her Choice of such as are productive of real, lasting, and solid Happiness, and rejecting those which bring only momentary Sensations of fleeting Joys, attended with future Misery and Remorse? You may observe, that the holy Man insinuated, that all the Pleasures we covet or enjoy by the Mediation of our Senses, are of this kind, they are neither permanent nor solid; the Pleasures arising from them are but as a Dream; they raise our Hopes and Wishes, when at a Distance, to the highest Pitch of Expectation; but when we come to the Fruition, we grasp a Shadow, and half the Pleasure is lost in the Disappointment we meet with in the most ravishing Enjoyment of Sense; with how much Care then ought we to guard against the false Blandishments of sensual Pleasure? and how much is it our Interest to cultivate those Habits in the Soul, which give us a Relish for the pure Pleasure of the Mind? That mental Happiness, resulting from the Reflection of having gain'd a Conquest over our Passion, and from a Consciousness of having acted up to the Dictates of refin'd Reason, and the Dignity of our Nature?

It is only in the Gratification of the grosser Appetites, continued the Dervise, and

in-wrong Elections, that Self-Love becomes criminal ; that is, when we, in Pursuit of Happiness, are contented with that kind of Pleasure, which debases our Nature below Humanity, and ranks us among the Brutes ; for in what consists the Difference between Man and the rest of the Brute Creation, but that he is endued with rational Faculties, capable of receiving Happiness without the Mediation of his Senses ? Strip Man of this reasoning Faculty, and he must pursue Pleasure in the same Manner as the wild Beasts. Hunger and Lust would then be his only Spur to Action, and his sole Pleasure would result from the Gratification of these Appetites : A Man then who never makes use of this Man-like Faculty, but places his Pleasure and Delight in those sensual Enjoyments, reduces himself from a State of Humanity, ranks himself in the Class of Brutes, and for this Reason cannot be said to act according to the Fitness of Things, or to answer the End of his Creation.

I have already, fair Sultana, discoursed of natural Love and Friendship, pointed out their Sources, the Degrees of Virtue and Vice that enter into their Composition, and the Pleasure resulting from these Affections, when under the Influence of impartial Reason. It remains now that your

Slave,

Slave, with your sublime Highnes's Permission, should say somewhat relating to the last and highest Degree of Love, viz. the Love of our Country. Natural Love has its Advantages in Society; it's the first Bond and Cement among Individuals; it's the first Link in the great Chain of social Life, and carries with it a healing Balm to all the Bitters of domestick Enjoyment; yet it is so much absorb'd in Sense, so closely connected with our irrational Part, that it ought to have the last Place in our Esteem. Particular Friendship advances nearer to rational Love: This is a Species of Love which Man enjoys above the Brute Creation, and the Pleasure resulting from it is more consonant to his own Nature, especially when it happens to be such as is not alloy'd with other Passions, as was the Friendship of *Omer* and *Osmin*. But the Love of our Country is still more refin'd from Sense, and approaches nearer to that divine Love which spoke Miriads of unexisting Beings into Happiness, and endued them with Faculties conscious of their Enjoyment.

The publick Spirit I would explain to your sublime Highnes, may be defin'd *that Pleasure resulting from the Consciousness of having done every Thing in our Power for the Advancement of the publick Good, without any*

Desire or Intention of gratifying any of our Passions, or promoting our Interest; Or the Desire we have to procure that Pleasure to ourselves, which follows upon the Reflection on such of our Actions as either have procured, or were intended by us for promoting the Interest of that Society of which we are Members.

According to this Definition the Affection is purely divine, and scarce to be met with among the Sons of fallen Man; but if we can trace particular Friendship to so pure a Source as that now mentioned, there is no Room to doubt, but some Men are possessed of this publick Affection in the strict Terms of our Definition: The Instances of both are rare, but those of the last much more so than the former; at least the Difficulty to make a Judgment of the Actions of those engaged in the publick Service is so great, that if any such Instances occur in human Life, they pass unobserved, and are stifled by the Pride, Malice, or Envy of Mankind, who are apt to construe the Intentions of Men, highly elevated above them, to flow from such Motives as would influence the Generality; and have no Notion that it's possible for human Nature to arrive at this Degree of disinterested Patriotism; besides, so many Advantages flow even from the Profession of this publick

lick Spirit, and much more from the real Affection, that we are apt to imagine that these are the Source of Action, where perhaps the Agent commits as great an Act of Self-Denial in accepting of these very Advantages, as he wou'd of Selfishness, if they were his ultimate End.

But we are not to expect of Man, in his present State, that many are to be found pursuing the publick Good, purely for the Pleasure of reflecting upon the Rectitude of their moral Character; no, we must be content to take them as they are, and satisfy ourselves, that they yield to those Passions, the Gratification of which tend to promote the publick Good, and stifle such, as directly tend to disturb its Peace. The publick Good, which ought to be the first Means of procuring Pleasure, is for the most Part, if not always, second in our View, and made the Pretext only, to obtain that Esteem, and those Emoluments, which are only due to the real Patriot. Thus Pride, which is only to be gratified by the Honour and Esteem of our Neighbours, beyond our real or fancied Merit, puts us upon doing those Actions, which are likeliest to procure us that Esteem, without any Regard to the Good of the Publick, abstracted from that Esteem. The ambitious Man pursues Power and sovereign

reign Sway, and to obtain it may be induced to pursue the Interest of his Country, if it leads to that great End of his Wishes, and puts him in Possession of those Places and Emoluments, which he thinks will afford him the greatest Pleasure ; but if proposing a Scheme diametrically opposite to the publick Good, as is often the Case, may chance to be productive of the same Advantages, in a shorter or less troublesome Method ; this very ambitious Man, who in the former Case breath'd nothing but publick Spirit, would soon turn Tail to his Country, raise himself upon its Ruins, and wallow in its Spoils. This shews that the publick Good, in his Esteem, was only the Means to gratify the Passion of Ambition, in the Enjoyment of the Fruits of which he plac'd his ultimate Happiness ; and this, if duly considered, is generally the Case of all Pretenders to publick Spirit. There never was a Tyrant who did not pretend the publick Good was the only Motive he had to take upon him the Care and Burthen of Government ; yet, when he has got Possession of it, by all the wicked Arts and Contrivances Cunning, Malice and Ambition could suggest, we find the Use he makes of it is to gratify the grossest Appetite and the basest Passions : It's so in the lower Classes of Life,

as well as the highest ; we honour and revere the Character, pretend to enjoy as much of it as our Stations will permit, but search us to the Bottom, Pride and Interest of the meanest kind sways our Patriot Principles.

Notwithstanding this selfish Disposition, which sways the Sons of *Adam*, yet the first Principle of this divine Affection is implanted in all of them, and is only stifled by yielding to the Dictates of our Senses. The first Gradation we may observe in that Sympathy and Affection we have for the Species in general, arises from a Pleasure we take in viewing every Thing that resembles ourselves ; it's as natural for Man to love his own Likeness, as it is to be pleased with himself : As often as we reflect upon ourselves we are delighted with our Existence, and consequently every Object which renews in us that Idea of our own Likeness, necessarily must carry along with it a Sense of Pleasure proportionable to the Difference between Reality and Appearance. This is the Rise of that Sympathy we feel for every Man we see, when we consider him only as a Man, without any other Acquaintance with him ; and as we can conceive the Idea of a Man, or many Men, without the Interposition of the Eye, and

and the Relation he has to us by Likeness, the same Idea of Pleasure is rais'd in our Minds, and spreads the social Affection to all the Inhabitants of the distant Corners of the Earth ; this is in a great Measure the Foundation of true publick Spirit, wherever that rare Virtue is to be found, and is itself distinguish'd by the Name of universal Benevolence : It differs only from Patriotism in the Object : Benevolence is extended to all Mankind, whereas publick Spirit is confined to a particular Country or Society, of which the Agent is Member : The former is in a purer Channel, and is not so much connected with the other Passions ; I mean, that Benevolence cannot be so easily counterfeited, nor does not so often serve for a Tool to promote the Interest of the Passions. It's very rare that one Man has it in his Power to do Acts which contribute to the universal Good of Mankind ; he can only shew his Benevolence to the Generality, by wishing them well, and by yielding Pity to the Misfortunes of Individuals : He who is truly benevolent must necessarily love his Country ; but that very Benevolence will check that publick Spirit when it interferes with the Good of the whole Species, or with that of a greater Number of Mankind than the Country consists of ; as for Instance, a

Man

Man universally benevolent, whose Soul is pleased with nothing that can hurt Mankind, and is inclinable to promote the Happiness of his Species by all Means in his Power, considers his Country but as a Part of the great Aggregate, and will incline to promote its Interest accordingly ; if the Society of which he is a Member should make War with Intent to destroy a Nation more numerous than itself, the benevolent Man should turn Enemy to his Country for the Sake of Mankind, and endeavour to preserve the greater Number of Individuals, whatever was the Cause of Quarrel ; but the Patriot, as I have distinguished him from the Benevolent, would take Side with his Country against all the World, and to preserve his native Spot of Earth, would be content to ruin half the Globe. The benevolent Man can never take Delight in War or Devastation, he can see nothing in Nature that can justify the taking Life from so many Millions as fall by the Sword ; he counts Existence the greatest Happiness, and thinks nothing can justify Men in destroying what is productive of so much Pleasure as Life is. He feels all the Calamities of the Miserable, and partakes of all the Anguish his Fellow-Creatures feel ; therefore, for his own Sake, he can consent to nothing that can make

them

them unhappy: This Emotion of the Soul, this Sense of Pain, which we feel from the Unhappiness of others, is term'd Pity or Compassion; is the necessary Consequence of Benevolence, and springs from the same Source with that noble Passion; tho' some Moralists have imagined it to be a Weakness in our Nature, and would rank it among our irrational Interests; but I apprehend, upon mature Consideration, it will be found to owe its Original to a reasonable Cause; for if we conceive, that every Man feels within him a natural Affection for his Species, flowing from the Likeness which he beholds of himself, it necessarily follows, that every Circumstance which represents such an Object in Pain, or in Danger of Pain, must raise in us an Idea which gives us Uneasiness in the same Proportion as our own Likeness created in us Pleasure; and as our Fears are always greater than our Joy, we may easily account for the Effects which sudden Accidents happening to others produce in our Minds. The Ideas, tho' distinct in themselves, yet, by the Action of the Mind, are so closely united, that the Comparison is made instantaneously, and by the pure Force of Sympathy. The Anguish which another feels, or is supposed to feel, is transferred to ourselves.

From

From what I have urged, Madam, you may apprehend, that I conceive Benevolence, and Pity or Compassion, to be the chief Springs of the true Patriot Spirit. He must be possessed of Benevolence to Mankind in general, and Pity and Compassion for Individuals: Without Benevolence to his Species he can take no Pleasure in doing them good; and without Pity, and a sensible Feeling of what they suffer, or are capable of suffering, he may be as little moved with the Sight of a Man upon the Rack, as if he were extended upon a Sophia, and feel no more Emotion at the greatest Want and Misery of his Fellow-Creatures, than if they abounded in Wealth, and were void of all worldly Care. But if he is truly benevolent, and compassionate in his Disposition, he must, to procure his own Ease, avoid all Actions that can hurt his Country, or give Pain to his Fellow-Subjects; and to obtain real Pleasure, must of Choice pursue such Measures as are productive of their Happiness.

It's true, fair Sultana, there are few, except the divine *Amurah*, the invincible Commander of the Faithful, that are contented with this pure, mental Pleasure; yet if we were not totally blinded with our Passions, and immersed in Sense, these are Motives sufficient to charm the human Mind

Mind into a Love of this true God-like Spirit: If we consider the fleeting Joys which the Gratification of our Appetites afford us, and the ravishing Pleasure which the benevolent Spirit feels on the Reflection of having done his Duty in Society, a rational Being could not hesitate one Moment on the Choice: If we consider the glorious Example set us by our holy Prophet, who underwent all the Fatigues and Perils of horrid War, among Nations of Infidels, in order to purchase Empire here, and Happiness hereafter, for the true Believers, we should be ashamed to confess ourselves Men, or Followers of that great Prophet, if we would not chuse to deny ourselves the Enjoyment of the gross Pleasures of this Life for the Sake of that Pleasure that enabled him to finish his glorious Mission: But above all, if we consider, that to habituate the Soul to a Relish of those sublime Delights, arising from the Contemplation of having acted up to the Dignity of our Nature, is in a Manner anticipating Heaven, and tasting the pure Joys, reserved for the departed Faithful, while we are yet on Earth: By it we arrive to the greatest Degree of Perfection Humanity can mount to, and imitate, as much as finite Beings can, that divine Attribute of the divine Being, Love;

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and from it we expect the Favour and Protection of his Providence here, and ultimate Happiness hereafter; but the Caravan just setting out, I must, my dear *Isabella*, refer the Remainder to my next. Farewel.

Constantinople the 15th
Day of the 1st Moon.

SELIMA.

L E T T E R. XXI.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

MY dear *Isabella*, the holy Dervise continued the Discourse which finished the last Letter in Words to this Effect: But as Mankind are not to be reclaimed from the Pursuit of their Passions, nor can totally eradicate them, let us enquire if Providence has not found out a Way to make even these subservient to the great Ends of Society. This obliges us to turn our Eyes on publick Spirit, not as the immediate Means of Men's Happiness and Pleasure, but the Means or Steps by which they come to the Enjoy-

ment of something else, which they apprehend will promote their ultimate Pleasure: This, though not so nobly born as the true Patriot Spirit, yet does the Business of Life, and keeps the huge Machine of Society from falling to Pieces.

This selfish Spirit of Patriotism, which generally usurps the Name of the legitimate Affection, we have been hitherto considering, has only some few Principles in common with that noble Passion, a small Degree of Benevolence, and its concomitant Compassion; they find themselves slightly moved by these Affections, are not entirely void of them, but possess them in so small a Degree, that they are not sufficient Spurs to Action; had such People no other Affections but Benevolence and Pity, they would remain sluggish and unactive; the Objects of them would not affect the Soul so strongly as to enable her to endure any Kind of Fatigue to answer their Solicitations: Therefore there are other Passions call'd in to animate them to Action, and set this sluggish Matter in Motion. Our own Necessities, and utter Inabilities of subsisting without Society, gives us the first Notion of social Life: The Advantages resulting to ourselves from the Protection of a well-ordered Government induces us to part with some Share

of our natural Freedom in order to enjoy them ; but though this Necessity is very apparent, and that every Man is sensible, without Commerce with the rest of his Species, he could not, with any tolerable Ease to himself, supply even his natural Wants, and that he cannot have these Advantages without contributing in some Measure to the common Good ; yet Man is naturally so lazy a Creature, and hates Labour so much, if there was nothing else to excite him to Action (I mean to Actions for the publick Good) but the apparent Necessity, the Business of Society would stand still, and the Affairs of Government would be totally neglected ; for as the great Affairs of the Community must be managed by a few, these must be totally taken up in that grand Pursuit, and leave their own private Concerns ; therefore if they had no other Motive to Action but the Necessity they are naturally under of submitting to social Laws, and the weak Spirit of Benevolence we suppose them possess'd of, it's impossible they would submit to the Labour and Attendance which Government requires ; thus, as what is every Body's Business, is, to a Proverb, no Body's : The Affair of the Society must of Course be neglected, and the Union tumble into Confusion ; but Mankind have

found out a Method of ingrafting new Habits and Affections in the Soul of Man, which become so many Spurs of Action as they are so many Sources of Pleasure, whether real or imaginary ; of these Pride, Ambition, and Avarice are the Chief which tend to persuade Individuals to undergo the Drudgery of State.

It's no Matter to enquire if or not these Affections have any Root in the Soul naturally ; it is sufficient for our Purpose at present to demonstrate, that these three Vices, as they are generally supposed to be, are the main Springs of most publick Actions, and are the governing Principles in that Species of Patriotism we are now treating of : By Pride, I here mean that Pleasure we take in contemplating our supposed Merit, and the Sensation arising from any Thing that confirms us in our Opinion of its Excellency, which the Esteem of Mankind certainly does in the strongest Degree ; therefore the proud Man is greedy of Fame : I distinguish him from the ambitious in this, that though this last may be proud, and take Delight in reflecting upon his own Merit, and covetous of the Esteem of Mankind, yet he desires that Esteem should not be confined to empty Praise for the present, and Statues in after Ages ; but that his Fellow-Subjects,

jects, who, in his own Imagination, are infinitely inferior to him, may load him with Places of Trust, in Testimony of his Abilities, and with Honours, as the Reward of them : The proud Man may refuse all these as Trifles, and in doing so he betrays a superlative Degree of Pride, and lays a larger Snare for the Esteem of his Country than the other ; for by Refusal of those Honours which he undoubtedly supposes due to his Merit, he lays Claim to the Character of a truly disinterested Patriot, than which nothing can advance him nearer to the Adoration of Mankind ; and by this Means he flatters his Pride, in supposing himself possessed of an Excellence to which his Soul is a mere Stranger : And further, by this Self-Denial of Place and Power, he has fewer Enemies than the other ; for he rightly judges that the Pomp attending on Power and Authority, and the Opportunities the Possessors have of gratifying their other Passions, are Temptations which the Generality cannot withstand, and that most Men covet these Stations on that Account, and bear a Proportion of Malice and Hatred to any Man who is their Rival in these Pursuits ; however, both of them contribute to the Good of the Society, but the ambitious Man more than the superlatively proud, be-

cause the proud Man scorns to take the Drudgery of Government upon him, lest he should be supposed influenced in his Pursuits by the Advantages naturally attendant on Power and Authority ; but the ambitious Man, though he has nothing in View but to gratify his own Lust of Power, takes upon him the Affairs of Government, and leaves the more lazy Members of Society to enjoy their Ease, and pursue their Pleasures according to their Tafte: Now it's plain, though this last is a more active Member of Society, and may do a great deal of Good if the real Interest of the Society coincides with his ambitious Views ; yet he is by no Means so much the Object of our Affection or Confidence as the proud Man, because he is so much a Slave to Ambition, that to gratify that Passion he makes no Conscience of acting or promoting any Measures, however detrimental either to the Community or Individuals, upon Supposition, that such administer to his Itch of Power and Grandeur ; he may court the Esteem of the Publick, and make Profession of particular Friendship, but all must be subservient to his grand Scheme of Happiness, Pleasure, by the Mediation of Place, Power, and Preferment ; whereas the proud Man courts the Esteem of the Publick,

lick, and the Friendship of his Neighbours, for his own Sake, and places his sole Happiness in the Enjoyment of their Affections, by which Means they are morally certain, that to the best of his Judgment he will act every Thing that can procure, encrease, or continue that Esteem ; consequently their Happiness must still be in his View, and pursued steadily as long as he is under the Influence of this Love of Fame. There is but one Case wherein they can suppose he can be drawn from the Pursuit of what is their real Interest, that is, supposing (as is but too often the Case) that the People, by some Kind of epidemick Infatuation, were brought to relish Measures diametrically opposite to their natural Interest ; in that Case the proud Man would swim along with the Torrent, and go on in his old Track of paying Court to the Voice of the People, by administering even to their Folly, since that Conduct would procure him his darling Wish, their Approbation of his Worth and Excellence, and the contrary deprive him of that Pleasure.

But, as this Case very seldom happens, the Lover of Fame is always intitled to, and generally possesses the Esteem of Mankind, if he has Ability of being useful to Society ; and, though upon mature Con-

sideration, they are, or may be sensible, that it proceeds from a superlative Degree of Pride and Vanity; yet they esteem it a noble and generous Motive to Action; and if at any Time they call this Love of Fame by its own Name, Pride, they are sure to distinguish it by some Advantage or Epithet, from that Species of Pride they have loaded with Infamy and Contempt; that is, they have found this Species of Pride so useful to Society, and so productive of great and heroick Actions, that they justly esteem it a Virtue, and have contrived Ways and Means to promote this Passion as much as possible; they bestow on it all the Encomiums human Nature can invent, Titles of Honour, and meer Sounds are used as so many Charms to conjure up this Affection; even inanimate Things, such as Statues, Obelisks, Tombs, Monuments, and pompous Inscriptions to the dead, become so many Spurs to excite the Vanity of the living, and hurry them on in such Pursuits as can procure them solid Fame, and these important Expressions of it. Another Reason that creates more Friends to this pride-born Virtue is, that as often as any Man discovers an Inclination to gain our Esteem, so often he creates in us an Idea of our own Excellence, and great Importance in

Nature; at the same Time that he gratifies his own Pride he tickles our Vanity in the most sensible Manner, by letting us know, that we have it in our Power to contribute to the Happiness of some Creature: We fancy to ourselves, that the proud Man, in some Measure, depends upon us, since we are necessary to his Pleasure; and, in Fact, he certainly does depend upon us for so much of his Existence as he receives Pleasure from our Esteem; for as he measures his Existence by the Pleasure he receives by the Medication of the Esteem of the Publick; the Envy, Hatred, or even Indifference of every Individual, deducts so much from the Sum total of his Happiness.

From what I have said, divine *Selima*, you may conceive how Pride and Ambition, when separate, contribute to the Good of the Publick; and may naturally conclude, that when these two Passions meet in one Man, they make up the active Patriot, and finish'd Hero; that is, they make up that Hero we admire so much, and on whom we would, and generally do, bestow all the Encomiums due to the real Patriot, whose Part in Life he occupies; for if we suppose a Man proud of his own Excellence, and covetous of being confirm'd in his own Notions of himself,

himself, by the Approbation of Mankind, and at the same Time not so much dead to the Calls of his other Passions, but to be willing to gratify them when they do not interfere with his good and ultimate End, Esteem of the Publick; and that among his other Passions he is possessed of Ambition: It naturally follows, that both his Pride, or Love of Fame, and his Ambition must prompt him to such Actions as merit the Esteem of the Publick: And as Love of Fame is supposed the governing Passion, he would be in no Danger of following Ambition no further than was consistent with Honour, which is only a Word instituted for this Species of Pride, consequently his Steps to Power must be the Interest of the People, and his Continuance will be no longer than he can pursue the same generous Plan: His Ambition in this Case would only serve as a further Spur to Action, and induce him to take upon him the weighty Affairs of Government, and pursue them with Alacrity. Such a Man, Madam, whatever mean Opinion Prejudice of Education may have given your Highness to his Motives of Action, is the most useful Member of Society, and is possessed in the greatest Degree of all the social Virtues, will practise them as much as if he pursued them for their

their own Sake, and not as Tools to Pride, and is but one Degree removed from the absolute Patriot: This last makes the Publick the Means to obtain his ultimate End, Pleasure; but the other pursues the publick Good to gratify his Pride, and from Pride expects the same ultimate End, Pleasure. Your Highness, who is, no Doubt, acquainted with *The History of the late Czar, Peter Alexowitz, of Russia, and Charles, King of Sweden*, may easily judge from these two Characters the Difference between a Sovereign actuated by Ambition, and the Love of Power alone, and one actuated by Ambition, and this Species of Pride joined. The *Czar* was ambitious as well as *Charles*, but he had likewise the Desire of obtaining the Esteem of Mankind upon other Considerations than Courage: He would have them believe, that he was possessed of Wisdom, and a Desire of Knowledge, which he intended to use for the Good of his People. To gratify his Ambition he caball'd against the invincible Porte, and made feeble Attempts to raise his Power higher than that of the mighty *Ottoman* Emperor's; but our Prophet was watchful of the Descendants of his House, and baffled the Attempts of this petty Infidel. He then wanted to extend his Dominion over his weaker Neighbours, the

Poles, and involved himself in continual Disputes with his Rival in Glory, *Charles the Twelfth.* All this was the Effect of ambitious Pride: But he employed the remainder of his great Stock of Vanity to much better Purposes; by his Efforts towards the Possession of Power he saw his Wants, and the Necessity of his People, being better disciplined before they could be fit Instruments to gratify his Ambition; therefore he spent all his Time in Learning them the Art of War; and not content to make them courageous, he attempts to make his rude and half-brute Subjects wise, and acquainted with the Arts, Trades, Manufactures, and Policy of the rest of *Europe*; for this Reason he travel'd in Person to all the Courts where he could learn either Art or Science to promote this End: He succeeded in his Endeavours, and by meer Dint of Industry he raised that stupid Nation to a Height of Glory, which they could never have known had not this Spirit possessed their Sovereign. That Infidel Prince, no Doubt, would have made the World believe, that he undertook all this Labour, and expos'd his Life to so many Dangers, purely for the Good of his Country; but your sublime Highness may easily perceive, that Ambition, and Love of Fame, were his

his darling Motives, and that he found that Conduct most conducive to that End, and therefore pursued it. On the other Hand, *Charles* the Twelfth was ambitious only of Power, and creating Terror, not Esteem; therefore he pursued his Itch of Power, without any Regard to the Good of his People, beggar'd and dispeopled a brave Nation, only for the Sake of having it in his Power to make his Neighbours stand in Awe of him, and dread his Re-sentment. The one Character we may admire and stare at, as it enabled the Agent to Acts of Valour, and personal Courage, beyond the Bulk of Mankind: But the other we not only admire, but have an Affection for, as his Actions, whatever were their Motives, were productive of so much real Good to so many of the Species. It's true, some few who advantaged themselves by the mad Spirit of *Charles*, may likewise esteem or reverence his Memory, but that flows only from the Idea they have of the Good he did them, which always recurs as often as they think of his Character in general.

Thus your Slave has endeavoured to make it appear, that Pride and Ambition are principal Springs of Action to the modern Patriot; it will appear equally conspicuous, that Avarice, and several other

Vices,

Vices, or such Passions as are esteem'd vicious, have Weight with Men of different Stamps, and contribute their Quota towards promoting the publick Good. Let a Man have great Talents fitted for publick Busines, a small Portion of Pride, or modern Honour, and some Sparks of Ambition, which few are entirely void of, but let his prevailing Passion be the Love of Money, that is, let him believe that Money is the only Thing capable of procuring him his ultimate End, Pleasure, (a Sentiment that is natural to most Men;) such a Man, with such a Stock, will of Course commence Patriot, and practise all the Arts which recommend the real Patriot; if these appear to him to be the best Means of acquiring Wealth, (a Conjecture in which he is not often mistaken) and in Consequence the Publick, which he only loves for the Sake of its Money, may be 'benefited by his Ability; but if (as in the Case of the ambitious Man) his covetous Disposition may be gratified in a greater Degree by Treason, Treachery, Rebellion, or any Action the most destructive of the Peace and Happiness of his Country, his Benevolence, his Compassion, his Pride, Ambition, and every other Passion he had in common, with the real or pretended Patriot, vanishes like Smoak,

Smoak, and he yields to the Dictates of the prevailing Lust, which in this Case we suppose Money: This of all Characters is the most odious, for Reasons which I have elsewhere hinted to your Highness, as it is most mischievous in its Consequences to Society, and interferes so much with the general Views of Mankind; and not that it has any worse Original than the more amiable Passion; for even this covetous Wretch is but a Degree removed from the idoliz'd Patriot: He pursues the publick Good, because Actions of that Kind procure him Power that procures him Wealth, and this last Pleasure, the ultimate End common to them both.

These three great Virtues or Vices (for they receive the Name of the one or other only as they are productive of, or destructive to, the publick Good) govern chiefly in Persons of high Life, and supply the several Societies of the World with purpled Drudges and State Mules; but they are likewise Springs to Action to the Vulgar, who all pride themselves in being assisting in carrying on the great Business of social Life; they affect these Passions in Miniature, and impose upon themselves, and others, with the Shew of Self-Denial: The Meaning of which Word they are not so much as acquainted with; but their

Preten-

Pretences are not so much to be censured as the Insincerity of the great and learned, who can discover the different Workings of their own Passions, know their simple Powers and combined Forces, and may call them by their proper Names and Characteristicks, yet fix Ideas to Words and Epithets, which have no more Relation to the Thing signified than the most glaring Contradiction; but the Cheat is universal, one Knave, as well as one Fool, connives at the other, and are only concerned to play their Parts in the great Farce of Life with the greatest Dexterity. The great, the leading Men, know one another; they see through the Disguise of Hypocrify, and false Pretences, to intrinsick Worth, but connive at the Cheat, in Hopes of the like Favour; and thus they have all combined like the industrious Bee, not only to avail themselves of the Virtues of the People, but to gather the Honey, the Wax, the Sweets and Strength of Society from the most poisonous Plants, the Vices, the Foibles and Credulity of the great Herd: It's by this Means the great Beast is tam'd into social Subjection, and govern'd by a few easy Maxims which affect Things that infinite Goodness without infinite Power would attempt in vain.

Thus,

Thus, my dear *Isabella*, the good Dervise ended his Discourse on Love. I have been particular in my Relation of that Part of his Discourse which relates to the Love of our Country, for the Sake of your Son, the young *Ali*, whose tender Mind it is your Duty to form to the Love of Virtue, and instruct in those Arts which can make a People, as well as a Sovereign, happy. You see, my dear *Isabella*, how many Passions Man has to conquer before he can arrive at a true Relish of that pure, mental Pleasure, which elevates us so high in the Esteem of God and Men. You must teach the young *Ali* betimes his Relation to the rest of his Species, the Necessity he is in of their Assistance, and the exquisite Pleasure arising from their Esteem, and every other Circumstance that may cultivate his Benevolence, and make that God-like Passion his governing Principle, and the Gratification of it his chief Pleasure. The Dervise's Discourse will likewise furnish you with Hints to teach him to study Men, their Passions, Affections and Habits, and how to turn and wind them, and play them against one another, in order to promote the great Business of the Society, over which he may one Day reign, by the Favour of the invincible *Amurath* your Father. Treasure up these

Precepts as the choicest Jewels; lock them up in the Cabinet of thy Heart, where nothing should come but the Love of God, and his holy Prophet. Remember thy Mother, and may *Mahomet* hear my Vows, and protect my Child through the dark Vail of this World, and at last lead her to the eternal Mansions of Pleasure and Delight, prepared for the Race of the Prophet, and the mighty Ottomans. Adieu.

Constantinople the 7th
Day of the 9th Moon.

SELIMA.

LETTER XXII.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

WHETHER the holy Dervise, my dear *Isabella*, has done the preceding Subjects Justice, I will not affirm; but this I can say, that he gave me so much Satisfaction, that I thought it not unworthy of me to write, nor of thee to read. In his last Discourse he proceeded

to illustrate Justice, in the Description of mutual Fidelity and Truth, which he asserts to be its Foundation, the firmest Bond of Peace, and the very Soul of Society; and that without their supporting Assistance, all Order, all Decency among Men, would run into Confusion and Extravagance. Even those very Men, who trample upon Justice, and who without trembling dare commit the most violent Outrages against it, acknowledge its Use, by observing and keeping up some Likeness of these Virtues among one another,

Faith, continued he, is either of a publick or of a private Nature, (but as my Business here is to inform the Mind of divine *Selima*, how she shall conduct herself to Happiness, I shall forbear expatiating on the first Head, and address myself only to the explaining and inlarging of the second. I take private Faith, in the simple Acceptation of the Term, to consist in the mutual Dependance Men should have upon one another for the Performance of their Engagements. This Law is almost co-eval with Mankind, and is no other than that we should attribute to each other what we ourselves would chuse to receive in the like Circumstances; notwithstanding, so depraved is human Nature, though every Man has a true Sense of this Obligation,

yet we find many who endeavour to impose upon their own Minds by equivocal Evasions, and think themselves very secure in the Breach of their Contracts, if they can find any Shift to satisfy the natural Scruples of their Conscience: To adjust this Matter, and to disable us from deceiving the World, or our own Consciences, Men need only consider their Abilities in plighting their Faith. Secondly, those with whom they contract, and next the Thing engaged for, and lastly the Manner and Form of such Engagements: By Mens considering their own Abilities, I would be understood to mean, that they should be able, and have it in their Power to perform their Contract; and that in the Sense which the other party conceiv'd it; if any Person shall give a Promise, who is under the Protection or Guardianship of another, such Persons, having no Power over themselves, are not therefore able to contract, such as Wives, Children, Minors, &c. but if they, under whose Jurisdiction such Persons live, shall consent to ratify their Engagements, such Compacts then oblige, and are valid to all Intentions and Purposes: Now as to the Person with whom a Contract is made, it is no Matter what his Character or Condition is, it should be punctually observed, and

faithfully executed, let the Consequences resulting from it be what they will. There are but two Cases I know which can possibly disannul the Solemnity of a Contract ; the first is, if the Party to whom the Obligation is given either distrusts, or does not accept of it without some other Security, in this Case the Person who offers the Contract may in some Measure be absolved ; for as Faith should be mutual, Diffidence destroys this Purpose of it, and Suspicion is as disreputable in the one Party, as Deceit is dishonourable in the other ; for this Reason no Body will charge a Prisoner with a Breach of Faith, who escapes from Goal, because Promises are no longer binding than they have Credit given them ; but every Man will censure him who flies away after he has promised the contrary : These two Circumstances, I think, illustrate the great Difference between Faith and Security, which some have falsely imagined to be synonymous Terms ; the other is, that as every Contract is in its own Nature reciprocal, of Consequence therefore conditional, then certainly the Person who violates his Part, leaves the other at full Liberty, and absolves him from every Tie such Obligations might lay him under ; but so long as any Person punctually keeps Faith with us, though he were a Robber, we should

religiously do the like by him, because if any Man shall descend so low as to treat with such People, he should have Honour enough left for himself to adhere faithfully to his Agreements : Now, as to the third Consideration, which regards the Thing stipulated for, if the Contract is either impossible or unjust, we are absolutely discharged from the Performance ; that to Impossibilities there lies no Obligation, has been an old Maxim ; if the Contract is naturally unjust, we are then guilty of an accumulated Offence if we keep it, by foolishly entering into, and wickedly abiding by, such Compacts : If a Ruffian should, with a drawn Sword, desire me to swear that I would assassinate the divine Sultan, whom all the Host of Heaven guard, what should I do in such Circumstances ? I'm guilty if I swear to an unjust Act, and doubly criminal if I perform it : Death is eligible to a real, good Man, before an Act of Injustice. For to apply the Principle, that of the two Evils the least is to be chosen, in this Case, is dishonest and scandalous : Do not Evil, was the incessant Precept of our great Prophet. Now as to the last Consideration, the Manner and Form of entering into Contracts, or the Motives inducing us to execute them, we may consider how far we are bound by such as are

are extorted from us. Though compulsive Contracts have been always dispensed with, because Men were not at Liberty; yet I must beg Leave to dissent from this Opinion, and affirm, that let the Necessity be ever so pressing, our Will is, in such Cases, at least uncontrollable, and in this Instance may chuse Death, which we should rather do than contract impiously. I entreat your sublime Highness not to be startled at the Strangeness of this Doctrine, I mean, that we should be thus resolute only when the Almighty God of Heaven is invoked as a Witness to our Engagements. As this World abounds with Deceit, the supreme Being, from his infinite Justice and Wisdom, must be the properest Object to swear by, because he knows whether the contracting Parties will deal faithfully, and from his Justice and Power will certainly revenge himself, and the Innocent. Thus ended the sage Dervise. My dear *Isabella*, I confess, that his Notions of Oaths and Contracts seem too rigid; notwithstanding, if we consider the Dignity of that Being before whom we all stand, and in whose Presence all Contracts are made, we should, with a scrupulous Nicety, observe all our Engagements. Though I believe human Nature is hardly capable of going as far as the

Dervise expects, yet the more perfect we are, so much the nearer we approach to Happiness. Farewel.

Constantinople the 13th
Day of the 10th Moon.

SELIMA.



LETTER XXIII.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

MY dear *Isabella*, in my last I gave thee our holy Dervise's Sentiments of Justice, considered under the Head of mutual Faith; rigid Justice indeed! however, the Observance of his Precepts on this Subject do not entirely stand out of human Reach. He argued farther in our last Conversation concerning another Kind of Justice, which he terms relative. Divine Sultana, says he, though we are taught the Laws of Society by our own Exigence and Dependance upon one another, and though the Principles of Beneficence and Humanity must incontestibly arise from the attending to these Wants of ours, yet there is another Species of Justice which more immediately claims our Regard, than the general Relation we have to the Members of Society; these are our Duties as a Husband, Father, Master, and their Correlatives, Wife, Child, Servant, &c. The parti-

particular Duties resulting from these Relations are so fundamentally grounded in Nature, that no Violence can totally dissolve them. As Husband and Wife are the original Springs from whence the two others derive, I shall, with your Permission, divine Sultana, first examine this Relation. The Offices of Husband and Wife are very solemn, as the Happiness of the Society in general, in some Measure, depends on their faithfully discharging themselves in their respective Capacities ; that each should clearly understand their peculiar Province, and conduct themselves right, they should be first informed, that the Duties of the Marriage State are of two Kinds, reciprocal, and particular ; I make this Distinction to disabuse those, who have believed it to be a pure State of Equality. By the reciprocal Duties, I mean all such as equally bind both Parties, such as mutual Affection, unshaken Fidelity, and a Communion and Sharing of every Thing without Reserve, an equal Care in the Conduct and Management of their Families, in the educating of their Children, &c. these I call reciprocal, because that neither the Neglect, Absence, or Death of the one can lessen the Exercise of these Offices in the other ; the particular Duties are such as peculiarly belong to Man and Wife, as they stand in an unequal Relation

one to another, such as, that the Husband shall love, cherish, comfort, instruct, direct, maintain, and govern his Wife, and all this he should do with the Tenderness of a fond Parent, and the Respectfulness of a sincere Friend ; and such as are incumbent on the Wife, Obedience, Silence, Frugality, and Attendance on the Affairs of her Family. I do not, divine *Selima*, consider the Share which Women have in the nuptial State in the rigid Mussulman's Sense ; no, Madam, I know that a Woman is compos'd of the same organiz'd Body with Men ; that her Soul is the same divine æthereal Spirit ; and that, if the Preference was disputed, the Point must be determined in Favour of them, as their Structure is more delicate, and their Frame infinitely more lovely than any Thing the Sons of *Adam* can boast of ; but 'tis certain, that the supreme Being originally intended Man for Sovereignty and Government, for this Reason he bestow'd a Strength of Body superior to Woman, to enable them to protect and procure such Necessaries and Conveniencies, as by Reason of their Weakness lay quite beyond their Reach. Thus, great Madam, you see that Providence has so ordered this Matter, that Woman, without any Offence to the Excellence or Dignity of her Birth,

Birth, was originally created in a State of Dependance, and that Mankind have not enslav'd them through unreasonable Ambition or Wantonness. Now, as to the End proposed in a matrimonial State, though the Parties often enter upon it without any View of promoting the great Design; yet Providence takes Care that the End shall not be frustrated, and that it shall terminate, as it really should, in the Propagation of our Species: Hence branches out another Relation, that of Parents and Children; the Duties here are wholly reciprocal, the Offspring being equally derived from the Father and Mother, can admit of no unequal Share in their Affections; the Love of Parents to their Offspring so universally diffuses itself through the animal Creation, that this Principle seems almost not more natural than innate: Shou'd any Parent refuse its Offspring the necessary Assistance of nourishing, fostering, &c. and expose it to encounter with Wants and Miseries, would he not act against the Sentiments of his own Conscience, and deny that general Law of doing as he wou'd be done by? After this the Duty of the Parent does not cease; their Education calls next for their most serious Regards, and very justly, since the future Happiness of the Child intirely depends on this Point,

Point, and Prejudices, early conceived, impress themselves so strongly on Infant Minds, that scarcely any Time, or future Advantage can obliterate : In Order more effectually to carry on this Work, it is necessary to invest the Parent with an Authority to restrain, correct, influence, and direct all the Actions of his Children, nor should this Privilege stop when they can talk and walk, for it does not follow that they are yet able to reason, or go alone ; strong Passions may seduce, or Inexperience destroy in this World of Deceit : It is therefore expedient, that all Parents should have a Right of chusing for, and directing their Children, and no Age or Condition should exempt them, at least, from the Privilege of recommending what should be done, and what omitted. However, this paternal Authority, uncontrol'd and unconfin'd as it may seem, extends its Dominion no farther than to promote the Interest and Happiness of the Offspring ; should a Parent command his Child to do Evil, he is at full Liberty to refuse such Injunctions, being accountable for his Actions to the supreme Being, and the Society of which he is recogniz'd a Member. Now let us examine the Duty which Children should maintain towards their Parents for their Care in the rearing and educating

ting them: No Man dares be so prophane as to deny Worhip and Adoration to the all-just and powerful GOD, for bestowing upon him an immortal Soul; how then shall we refuse Reverence and Obedience to our Parents, who are the Authors of our Existence here? Beside, if the Thoughts of Annihilation be terrible, and that the Consciousness of our Being is a Kind of Happiness, how much are we indebted, how oblig'd should we be to them by whom we are? The very Name of Parent has something so tender, so endearing in it, that our great Prophet, as well almost as every other Nation, addresses the one great GOD with this Title: As no Body is supposed to love another so well as Parents do their Children, so there are none whose Admonitions should be received more cordially than theirs, as Love and Obedience should go Hand in Hand through the Course of our Parents Lives, we should particularly exert this Duty towards them, at the Verge of Life, and Decline to the Grave; or in Case of any other Distress, it is then we should assist, cherish, and comfort them, lest we should be thought ungratefully to withhold that friendly Beneficence which indulged us when unable to provide for ourselvses. Now as to the last Kind of Relation, which respects

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Masters and Servants, here again the Duties are conditional, that is, that the Master shall faithfully discharge all Compacts and Agreements with his Servants, and that he shall always remember that they are composed of the same Materials, and that their Ideas of Pleasure and Pain are the same, and that Servants, on their Parts, shall diligently employ themselves in their particular Office, and interfere with nothing out of their Station ; that they will faithfully keep all his Secrets, honour and obey him in every Thing lawful. I own, great Madam, that I have ever been an Enemy to the enslaving of our Fellow-Beings, as I imagine it is a Breach against the Designs of Nature ; let Accident or Misfortune reduce a Man ever so low, it cannot debase him to such a Degree as to destroy that Equality which naturally subsists between the human Species. Here ended the holy Dervise. I intreat thee, my dear Child, that thou wilt treasure up this good Man's Doctrine in thy Soul, that thou wilt never forget thy Duty to us thy affectionate Parents, to thy own Children, and that thou wilt remember thy Slaves always as Co-partners of thy Nature. Farewel.

Constantinople the 4th
Day of the 12th Moon.

SELIMA.
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LETTER XXIV.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

MY dear *Isabella*, yesterday the Chief of the black Eunuchs entertained me and my Slave with the History of the young and unfortunate *Sophi of Persia*: This young Prince is the last of the Royal House of *Perſia*; he was born in Sight of Empire, but a few Months passed between his Birth and the Ruin of his Hopes, and the utter Destruction of his illustrious House. The usurping Rebel *Thamas Couli Kan*, a Slave by Birth, and a Robber by Profession, took Advantage of the popular Disquiets, raised by the Indolence of the late *Sophi*, and out of Pretence of asserting the Liberties of the People, deposed and murdered his Sovereign; the Tyrant had still so much Modesty left, as not to pretend to seek Empire in his own Right, but crowned the young *Sophi* yet in his Cradle, paid himself, and obliged the Nobility and Princes of *Perſia* to swear Allegiance, and pay Homage to their Infant Emperor, in whose Right he himself pretended

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ed to rule Supream. This Pretence to Liberty, this outward Shew of Moderation gained the Tyrant many Friends, who otherwise abhorred the Treachery and Cruelty practised against their deceased Monarch ; they were sensible, that he held the Reins of Government with too slack a Hand, and allowed Vice, Immorality and Corruption to overrun the whole Empire, without any Check or Control ; had permitted Sloth, Effeminacy, and Licentiousness to take Place in the Army, and suffered the Authority of the Magistracy, throughout his vast Dominions, to dwindle into the lowest Contempt. This produced Partiality in the Distribution of Justice, Embezzlement of the publick Revenue, heavy Taxes upon the People ; Robberies, Murders, Rapes of Virgins, and the greatest Acts of Injustice were to be met with in all Corners of the Kingdom, and a general Spirit of Discontent possessed the whole People. This the Princes of *Perſia* saw and knew to be the State of their Country, when *Thamas Couli Kan* deposed the old Sophi ; they were sensible he had pursued Measures, and gone Lengths to free them, at leaft on Pretence to free them from these Calamities, which they could not justify to their Conscience, nor reconcile to that Duty they owed the deceased

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Emperor, to them the Vicegerent of the Almighty ; but as the Thing was done, and that the Usurper owned his Allegiance to the young Sophi, they thought it the prudentest Method to submit to his Government, till their Emperor should come of Age to take the Sceptre into his own Hands : But they were deceived in the arch Rebel ; he had no such benevolent View, he was conducted by no such generous Sentiment, as the Good of his native Country ; the black Angel had taken full Possession of his Soul, and first suggested to him the wicked Notion, that a Subject should make himself Judge of his Sovereign's Actions ; he inspired him with Ambition to reign, and blotted out any Remains of Loyalty, Humanity or Benevolence that might have been lurking in his Soul ; he taught him to feign Moderation, Self-Denial, Love of his native Country, and an ardent Desire of Liberty, in order to lull the infatuated *Persians* into destructive Security ; like the first Seducer of Mankind, he assumed a fair Outside ; wore Virtue as a Vizard, to hide the monstrous Deformity of his Soul. He knew if he was to appear among Mankind in his natural Shape, the horrid Spectre, the infinite Number of accumulated Vices would frighten them from that Indolence so ne-

cessary to his Design, and unite all Mankind in one common League, to oppose the hell-born Monster. This was the real Design of his first Pretences; they were all a Scheme deeply laid, to catch the unthinking *Perfians*, to rob them of their ancient Race of Kings, the Descendants of *Ali*, and entail Misery, lasting Misery on them and their Posterity, under the Denomination of a petty Robber, raised up by Heaven, to be a Scourge upon the Wearers of the Red Turban *, and those who have perverted the Laws of our holy Prophet, and swerved from those divine Precepts, laid down in that Book, which was dictated in Heaven, written by the Finger of God, and delivered by the Archangel *Gabriel* to our holy Prophet *.

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* The *Perfians* wear Red Turbans, and the *Turks* generally white, and call the *Perfians* Red Heads, by Way of Derision.

* The *Turks* and *Perfians* are as much at Variance with one another, as the Protestants and Papists; they hate one another with the same religious Zeal and Rancour, and agree in nothing but their Belief of the Mahometan Mission. After *Mahomet*'s Death, *Ali* the Son in Law of *Mahomet* took upon him to write a Comment upon the *Alcoran*, wherein he differed with the Followers of *Omar*. This last the *Turks* adhere to, and the *Perfians* adore the former; and by the Help of an Impostor, who pretended to be Coadjutor to *Ali*, they have composed

The Usurper no sooner saw the Peace of the Empire settled, and that the *Perfians* had submitted to the Government he had established in the Name of the Infant Emperor, than he, by Degrees, threw off the Mask of Virtue; it was troublesome to such a Wretch, the very Appearance of any Thing like Humanity galled his Soul; he could no longer stifle his Itch of Sovereign Dominion, tho' he enjoyed all the Revenue and Riches in *Perse*, and wanted only the Name of *Sophi*, which he permitted the Infant Emperor to wear; yet he grudged that empty Name of Majesty, and scorned to be wicked as Delegate for another; he must be impious, not as Proxy, but in his own Name, and therefore declared for himself. The *Perfians* had gone too far to retract, if they had any Honesty or Loyalty left, it was only to bewail their Folly and Credulity, they were in the Monster's Power, and must submit, without any apparent Signs of

posed a Creed different from that of the *Turks*; and tied themselves up to the Observance of several Rites, Ablutions and Forms of Prayer unknown to the other Mahometan Sectaries, and for which they are held in Abomination by all the rest of the Musulmen; in short, the Followers of the Impostor *Mahomet* are as zealous in damning one another as any of us Christians can be, and find out as many ridiculous Reasons to justify their religious Malice.

Murmuring ; nay, they pretend to be under Obligations to the successful Traitor, for vouchsafing to accept of them as his Slaves, and for weilding the Sceptre of *Perſia*, in Reward of what his Minions pretend he has done for them, in relieving them from the Bondage of their former Kings. However, there are still among them some, who are ſensible of their miſerable Condition, and are willing to ſhake off the Usurper's Yoke ; by their Means the young *Sophi* has found Means to escape the Snares laid for him, by the Blood-thirſty Usurper, and to put himſelf under the Protection of the ſublime Port of the invincible *Amurath*, who is the Lan-thorn of diſtrefſed Virtue, and deſtined from all Eternity to be the Scourge of that hated Traitor *Couli Kan*.

It was the Arrival of that young Prince in this Capital, that put the Chief of the black Eunuchs upon relating to me his Adventures, and the Part my Sovereign Lord the Commander of the Faithful intends to take in his Favour ; that Minister acquainted me, that the young *Sophi* is no leſs allied to Empire, and ſovereign Sway, by Birth and Blood, than by Merit conſpicuous and Royal Magnanimity ; he ſays he bears his Misfortunes, and that of his House, with a Spirit that can only be

be supported by divine Aid ; and tho' reduced to become a Suppliant to earthly Powers, for the Recovery of what is his by Nature ; yet he condescends to nothing beneath the Dignity of sacred Majesty, that innate Greatness of Soul inseparable from such as are born to reign, appears in all his Actions ; he rather commands our Esteem than courts it ; and tho' every Way sensible of the low State of his Fortunes, yet he betrays no Symptoms of Fear, Despair, or any mean Passion, nor yet Arrogance or affected Pride ; in a Word, this young Prince, without the Years necessary to acquire Wisdom, Moderation, and Submission to the divine Providence, practises all these Virtues, as if they had been born with him ; his Philosophy is not only speculative, but practical. It would amaze you, dear *Isabella*, as well as raise in you the most tender Emotion of Pity and Compassion, were I to relate to you all the Dangers, Perils and Difficulties the young Hero has underwent, before he could obtain the Happiness of an Interview with the invincible *Amurath*. The Plots laid to ruin him and his Party, the Snares laid for his Life, the several Shifts, Disguises and Stratagems he was obliged to go through, and practise in his Escape, would seem a Romance ; yet

all this he suffered without repining, without accusing Providence, without despairing of Success, or desponding under the Weight of his Calamities, tho' he looks upon all that has befallen him and his House as the Hand of Fate. He reads in legible Characters the Hand of Providence in all his accumulated Woes, and adores the divine Wisdom that can bring Order out of Confusion, and terminate all Events for the Good, the Advantage, and Happiness of the Faithful.

My dear *Selima*, those of our Sex are naturally compassionate towards the unfortunate of any Sort, even the Sufferings of a Criminal affect our Tempers, we feel the Rack before he is stretched on it, and find in us almost the Effects of the Bow-string, before the Mutes have attempted their Office upon the vilest Malefactor; but when we join real Worth, intrinsic Excellence, and all the amiable Attractions of social Virtue to the Idea of Sufferings, we feel a Smart beyond Pity; the thought is tormenting, not only to female Hearts, but even to obdurate hard-hearted cruel Men; the Chief of the black Eunuchs, whom you know to be a Monster, as much deformed in his Mind, as he is in his Person, was even himself affected with the Picture he gave me of the young Sophi, that Minister of

Death ; and he who has seen hundreds in the sublime Seraglio yield their Lives to the murdering Mute's Orders, has sacrificed Thousands to cure the dark boding Fears of political Jealousy, yet melted into Softness at the Repetition of the Misfortunes of the young *Persian*. What Wonder is it then, that I was moved with the tragick Tale, and yielded my Soul at once Captive to his Interest. There is more than common Sympathy to suffering Greatness ; there is a sacred Reverence due to Royal Majesty, a Kind of innate Loyalty, to which Savages are subject, which interests us in the Cause of Royal Virtue. My Mind has not only been taken up in admiring the strange Events, which make up the History of the young Sophi ; no *Isabella*, Curiosity, Love of Novelty, might make even feigned Relations of that Kind agreeable ; but what claims most my Attention, is the Magnanimity, the Fortitude of the young *Persian* ; 'tis that interests me in his Fortune, and convinces me, that it is not Pity alone which gives me so advantageous an Idea of him ; it is his Virtue more than his Sufferings I admire ; and I am puzzled in my Mind, to find out the Original of that mighty Stock of which he is possessed, which enables him to stem the Current of such adverse Fortune with such a calm Temper, and Serenity of Mind, and

elevates him, tho' without Empire, Subjects, Command, to a Station higher than most earthly Sovereigns. I have a strong Curiosity to know, if this is inseparable from Empirie or Birth, if the mighty Blessing is hereditary, and the indelible Mark of Sovereignty; or if it is a Virtue common to other Mortals, only more conspicuous in Kings. If that serene, that calm Smile, and unclouded Brow, amidst Torments greater than the Rack, is a natural Effect of Reason; if it is real or feigned, or from what Source it derives it's original. I have just now sent for my Dervise, to satisfy my Longing, for that good Man seems to have dipped into the Secrets of the Children of Men; he anatomizes their Passions, as if they were subject to the naked Eye, and traces them through all the Mazes and Windings of intricate Deceit, and worldly Cunning. I shall send you, my dear Child, by the next Caravan, the History of this amiable Quality, Fortitude, and give you the Dervise's Opinion of the *Persian* Hero, how far he may be set as an Example to the young *Ali*, and how far his Motives of Actions are below the Race of the mighty *Ottomans*; in the mean Time, you may discern, from what I have hinted of his History, the Instability of human Affairs,

and the Vanity of human Grandeur, and how much it is the Interest of sovereign Majesty, to be watchful over their Actions, since their slightest Faults, their most trivial Omissions, are productive of the greatest Ills: Had the late Sophi been mindful of the Duty he owed his Subjects, if he had considered, that that divine Being, who had placed him in that Station, held him accountable for all his Actions, and would take Cognizance of all his Crimes, he would have prevented these Complaints, which the Spirit of Rebellion magnified into unpardonable Sin, and deprived the Usurper of more than half his Strength; for had not the Vices, at least the Weakness of the murdered Monarch fought the Usurper's Battles, before he took the Field, all his Arts, his Cunning, and ill employed natural Courage had availed him little; teach the young *Ali*, that the Way to be great is to be good, and that Virtue and Honesty are the best Guards to an earthly Throne, as well as the best Steps to obtain a Crown of Immortality. Adieu.

Constantinople the 4th
Day of the 2d Moon.

SELIMA.

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LETTER XXV.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

MY dear Isabella, in my last I acquainted you with the Curiosity the Relation of the black Eunuch had raised in my Mind, and my Resolution to apply to the wise Bedriden for Satisfaction. I sent for the good Dervise, and, by Way of Introduction to my Queries, read to him the Rough-Draught of my last to you ; the holy Man was pleas'd to commend the Concern I had express'd for the young *Perſian's* Misfortune, with whose Affairs he was much better acquainted than I ; he likewise approved of my Desire to search the Bottom of a Character so uncommon and so amiable, and promised to give me all the Assistance in his Power to trace Fortitude through all its Progress and Appearances, to it's original Source in the Soul of Man : After a short Pause, as if he meant to recollect himself, he proceeded to analise that Passion in the following Manner.

Great Sultana, your sublime Highness has justly conceived a very high Idea of the Virtues of the young Sophi ; they deserve

serve to be imitated even by the Princes of the Ottoman Blood : That tender Concern you express for that unfortunate Prince, no Doubt, springs from a nobler Fountain than womanish Pity and constitutional Compassion ; there is a Sympathy in your Nature, which takes its Rise not so much from the Royal Blood that fills both your Veins, as from the Love of Virtue, common to you both, that is the only Chain, the only Cement, the powerful Attraction to noble Minds ; but Madam, that Love of Virtue, which you yourself possess in an eminent Degree, and that Magnanimity and truly heroick Fortitude, which you admire in the young Sophi, are by no Means inherent to your high Birth, or hereditary to any of your Race ; no, Madam, Virtue does not flow with the Blood, nor can it be conferred with earthly Honour, or monopolized by any particular Rank of Men ; no, it's common to all the Sons of *Adam* : The Seeds of true Fortitude are as natural to the Plebeian, to the meanest Slave of our great Sultan, as to the greatest Monarch on Earth : Kings enjoy by Nature nothing above the rest of Mortals ; they are born with the same Pangs of Labour to the Mother, they inherit the Wants and natural Necessities of their Species, Hunger, Thirst, and every other vulgar

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Appetite attacks them with the same Violence, and approaches their royal Couches with as little Ceremony as that of the meanest Vassal : Nature has made no Distinction in their Bodies, neither does Experience teach us that she has discovered any other Œconomy in the Formation of their Souls ; they have their Perceptions like other Men, and receive all their Ideas from without ; they have Passion as well as Appetites in common with the Herd ; in a Word, neither Virtue nor Vice is the Patrimony of any Set of Men more than that of others ; all the Difference we find among Mortals is owing to Constitution, form'd by Chance or Habits, contracted by Education. Had the young *Persian* Monarch been born of a Slave, he might have possessed as much of true Fortitude as he does now ; had he been educated in that servile Condition he might have practised that noble Virtue in the same Degree, but then it would not have been conspicuous to your Highness, it would not have made such an Eclat in the World, it would have pass'd away in Silence like a Shadow, as a Thing of no Moment in Nature ; but in the Sphere of Life in which Providence has placed him, his Virtue shines forth with radiant Lustre, and in that advantageous Point of Light appears

appears glaring to all the World : The Commonness of the Object, a great Prince, Heir to half the Globe, chased from his Crown by Tyranny and Rebellion of his Subjects, is so seldom to be met with ; no Wonder if we are surprised with the Novelty, and charm'd with that Virtue, which is Proof against so great a Share of adverse Fortune. This Reflection ought to make Kings humble, when they consider that they have nothing in them intrinsically superior to their meanest Slaves ; and yet the World expects more of them than the rest of Mankind, and their Vices do infinitely more Mischief than those of the rest of their Fellow-Creatures.

Thus, divine *Selima*, I have endeavoured to remove a Prejudice common to Royal Breasts, that they have Magnanimity as a Gift from Heaven, in which meaner Mortals are not to participate, lest it should hinder us in our Enquiry into the Original of that Cardinal Virtue ; for if we suppose it a Virtue, peculiar only to Sovereignty, the Bulk of Mankind would have no Concern in the Passion, and those of that elevated Dignity could not be brought either to discern it or esteem it, when they discovered it either in Reality or Appearance among their Subjects.

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Magnanimity, Madam, continued the Dervise, may be defin'd a *Consciousness of Real and Intrinsic Excellence, exciting us to the Exercise of Virtue.* Some Philosophers * have defined it, a Fighting for Justice and Honesty, and all Mankind are agreed, that Virtue is its only Object, and that it's impossible for a vicious, corrupt, or wicked Disposition to be possessed of any Degree or Species of true Fortitude. To suppose Fortitude to be employed in Support of Vice, or inhabiting a Soul morally vicious, is a Contradiction in Terms; for this Virtue is like the milky Way, a Constellation composed of an infinite Number of virtuous Passions, Habits, and Affections; every one of them so blended as to be scarce perceptible themselves to the Understanding; but by their united Lustre from that glorious Galaxy in the Soul, which shines out with such Radiancy as to surpass the Splendor of the starry Firmament, and to dazzle the Understanding as much as that Constellation does the naked Eye.

Its first Rise is a just Sense of our own Excellerice, a thorough Knowledge of our Nature, our Abilities, and Infirmities: The Duty we owe the Deity, the Relation

* The Stoicks gave this Definition of Fortitude.

we stand in to the rest of Mankind, and a Sense of the moral Obligation we are under to promote the Happiness of that Society of which we are Members ; without this Sense and Knowledge of ourselves and Mankind, it's impossible for any Being to be possessed of rational Fortitude.

I say, a just Sense of our own Excellence to exclude Pride, which is over-rating ourselves and our Abilities ; without such a Sense of our own natural Powers and Faculties, it's unreasonable to suppose, that we can apply them to their proper Uses ; if we have a mean Opinion of our Capacity, we are deterred from Undertakings that are difficult or intricate, and are led to low, groveling Pursuits ; if we have too high an Opinion of our Understanding, and other Qualifications, we are apt to undertake Impossibilities, or Things out of our Reach, a Foible to which may be ascribed most of the moral Evil arising from wrong Election, which we discern in the World ; for most Men, through Pride, are tempted to over-rate their Capacity and Judgment, and by that Means are hurried into a Sea of Trouble and Confusion : In a Word, the truly magnanimous Man must have a just Perception of Things, and their Relation, as they really are in Nature, and next must foresee how

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far they can contribute to real and lasting Happiness, that is, among the many Perceptions his Soul is capable of, must be able to make a just Election of such as are capable of producing his ultimate End, Pleasure and Happiness, suited to his Nature. A Man endowed with this Degree of moral Rectitude must conclude, that as his Nature far exceeds that of the Brute Creation, it's impossible that the same Species of Pleasure can afford him Happiness which he sees them pursue; therefore he naturally despises the Pleasure resulting from the Gratification of the Senses, as beneath the Dignity of his Species. In this Choice then of Pleasure those of the mental Kind must be his Election, and he esteems every Action in which the Soul, the Understanding, and the Mind is not concern'd, as beneath his Dignity; of Consequence, the social Virtues must be his Study, as most fruitful of Means to afford him mental Pleasure. Thus then true Fortitude may be measured by the Degree of Conquest a Man has obtained over his brutal Passions and Appetites, and the Proportion of universal Benevolence he is possess'd of, and in this Sense all Mankind, every Individual whatever, who have their Opportunities of exerting it, may be possessed of some Share of this high-born Virtue

tue . For there is no State so low, but a Conquest is necessary, and may be obtain'd over the Passions, and Preference given in the Mind to those Pleasures which are truly mental ; for it is falsely said, that there is no Virtue without Trial, and no Merit in the Affection unless we have had a Temptation to deviate from its Dictates ; in Regard that a Man may be benevolent in the highest Degree, his Soul may glow with the most ardent and unconfin'd social Love, and disinterested Esteem of his Species, and yet never have an Opportunity of exerting it, any more than he may have for his Strength, or any other natural Ability, though none will deny but a Man may have Strength, though he should never use it ; it's true, the Exercise of the Passions shews their Degree, and without it neither we ourselves, nor any one else can, with any Certainty, judge how far they would affect us in our Actions, no more than a Man of the greatest Strength can determine without Trial the precise Weight he is able to move. We may be possess'd of this amiable Virtue, and suppose ourselves actuated by it in all our Actions, yet be unable to ascertain the true Degree in which it governs us ; but unless we had it naturally, Trials, Temptations, nor any other Circumstance, could

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ever bring us to the Enjoyment of it; though these might confirm us in our Opinion of it's Beauty and real Utility, and inspire us with a real Love for the Affection itself.

In fine, Madam, a Man possessed of Magnanimity, as thus generally explain'd, may practise it in whatever Station of Life Providence has placed him, whether in a high or low Sphere, in Prosperity or Adversity, the Path of Fortitude is still to be pursued and esteem'd: He may always have a true Notion of the Dignity of his Nature, of the real and intrinsick Excellence of his Species; he may find Delight in pursuing such Means of Happiness, as distinguish him from the Brute Creation, or such of his own Kind as are swallowed up in Sense and Appetite: He may despise the Gratification of his irascible Nature, and gain an entire Conquest of his brutal Passions; and find his sole Pleasure, and a real and substantial Satisfaction in the Enjoyment of mental Reflection, and exercising those Virtues which flow from universal Love and Benevolence. He may scorn the very Idea of a base and groveling Pursuit, and have no other Rule of Election but the Measure or Degree of Happiness he can confer upon the whole, or any Part of his Species: If a Man makes this

this the grand Criterion of his Conduct, the general Rule of his Behaviour, he is magnanimous, and possessed of Fortitude in the utmost Degree human Nature is capable of.

But, fair Sultana, permit your Slave to be more particular in his Disquisition upon this comprehensive Virtue, and give your Highness a short Prospect of it in all the various Scenes of Life.

Here, my dear *Isabella*, the good Dervise and I were interrupted by a Message from the great *Amurath*, who signified his Pleasure to be entertained in the Garden of the Seraglio by all his Slaves, among whom I was obliged to attend: But I shall have another Opportunity to hear the good Dervise upon this copious Subject, for by his last Words I understand, that he has hitherto given me only the Outlines of this amiable Virtue, and delineated as it were only a distant perspective View of this mental Country. How am I delighted with the Prospect, and my Soul ravish'd with this faint Image of the amiable Affection? My Soul rebounds with the mighty Pleasure it takes in beholding the charming Source of this imperial Passion; and yet something of Woman still remains in me, some of my first Parents Pride lurks in my Bosom, and I cannot help, in some

Measure, being angry with the Dervise, for communicating the heavenly Fire to slavish Mortals, and allowing them a Right to possess divine Fortitude in Co-partnership even with the Race of the mighty Ottomans ; it raises in me a certain Degree of Envy, to believe that Imperial *Amurath* owes no more to Nature than the meanest Slave in his Galleys ; that his Body and Soul, and that of mine, have no intrinsick natural Worth above the half informed Brute, that labours to give us Pleasure, and lives because we permit him. Sure the Dervise must be mistaken, I find something within me, and communicated to me by God-like *Amurath*, that cannot be matched in common Clay ; but yet Reason, Truth, ineffable, triumphing Truth, gives the Lye to my Imagination, and convinces me, that the holy Man is right ; that it is only Pride suggests the daring Thought, and persuades us to over-value ourselves on what we do not possess : Humility, and a candid Re-search into my Nature ; the numerous Wants I have not only in common with Slaves, but Brutes, call me back to my Senses, and proclaim the Wisdom as well as the impartial Equality of distributive Providence. Stifle, my dear *Isabella*, every pride-born Thought, that royal, ancient, and hereditary Female Vice ;

Vice ; it first taught Devils to rebel, and attempt to rival the Almighty, and on Earth having possessed our first Mother, brought Sin, Desolation, and a Miriad of deadly Woes upon proud Man. It appears, my dear *Isabella*, in all Disguises, and we cannot be too cautious of its Suggestions ; even when it puts on the most comely Aspect, it may lead us nearest to Destruction : It has been, and always will be, destructive to all the Species ; but to such as are in high Station it is most dangerous, because our Grandeur and worldly Circumstances tend so much to add Fuel to the hellish Fire, therefore let us search every Corner of our Hearts, anatomise every Habit and Affection in our Souls, and chase the ugly Fiend from every Receptacle he may find in the human Breast. It's for this Reason I listen to the Opinion of the aged *Bedriden*, and expect from him a Charm to expel the Poison from my Soul. Remember his Precepts as you covet to inherit the ineffable Joys of Paradise, and thy Mother's Benediction in her last Moments. Adieu, my *Isabella*, thy Mother salutes thee with a Kiss of Love and paternal Affection.

Constantinople the 2d
Day of the 4th Moon.

SELIMA.

LETTER XXVI.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

MY dear *Isabella*, the next Conversation I had with the Dervise, that good old Man continued his Discourse on Fortitude in Words to the following Purport.

Most sublime Sultana, we may, in taking a nearer View of this divine Virtue, make this general Division of it, as it respects the different Circumstances of the Agent, that is, as he has Occasion to exercise it, either in Prosperity or Adversity.

In Adversity this Virtue is put to Trial, in bearing the Frowns of adverse Fortune, and the Calamities incident either to the Species in general, or to our particular Station in the great System of Society. This is the Case of the young *Perfian* Monarch, this is what has brought his Magnanimity to Light, and evinces us, that his Fortitude is either natural, or the Force of an acquired Habit, that has taken such deep Root in his Soul, as to hinder us from distinguishing it from an innate

Affection, if there is any such in the human Heart. What is it, divine *Selima*, that can bear up this young Hero amidst such a Torrent of uncommon Woe ? What Fate can arm him with that calm Serenity, that undisturbed Disposition of Mind which he enjoys, amidst the general Catastrophe of his illustrious House, and the dire Calamities of his native Country ? It can be nothing but natural, rational, and a well founded Fortitude, that can work the mighty Miracle in a Mind so young, at an Age when the Tide of Blood runs high, and the Pride of Imperial Birth quickens the Sensation of the boiling Passions : When the Appetites are keen, and the Sense of Enjoyment uncloyed with Possession, his Magnanimity must be natural, and built upon no other Basis than solid Reason or Virtue, else those impetuous Torrents of Passion and Appetite would soon break down all false and artificial Fences, which Craft or Cunning could raise to controul them. What Virtues then, my most adorable Queen, can produce the wondrous Effect, to give Youth the Experience of old Age, and plant gray hair'd Philosophy on beardless Years ? None but such as are the chief Ingredients of divine Fortitude. The Royal Youth has early studied his own Excellence, and has found

out, that he has an intrinsick Worth, independent of the Pomp of Empire. The gaudy Trappings of human Grandeur, or the transient Glow of sensual Enjoyment, conscious of his Existence, and of his real independent Worth as a Man, and that all other Enjoyments are but as a fleeting Shadow to this heavenly Pleasure. What Wonder is it, that he still bears the Mind, the Air, and indelible Characteristick of real Majesty? He can never be reduced so low as to want Subjects, he commands Miriads more nobly born than all the Race of *Adam*, while he rules his own Passion. These are the Subjects worthy of a great Monarch, and that the Itch of Power that becomes a Man, when he turns his Eyes inwardly, and contemplates his natural Powers and Faculties above the Brute Creation, the Pleasures and unspeakable Transports his rational Soul is capable of, beyond the Bounds of their confined Instinct. What Reason has he to complain against the divine Majesty, if he had made him but the lowest of the human Race? Even in that Station, he could value himself for Happiness, which an infinite Number of Beings are not capable of; as Man, he can contemplate the infinite and adorable Perfection of the eternal Mind, and his capacious Soul can weary its ever active

Faculties in the boundless Admiration of this mighty Fabrick of the Universe. He may be ravished with the infinite Wisdom that discovers itself in the Mecanism of this mundane System ; the beautiful Order of the several subordinate Parts that constitute the universal Harmony ; the uniform Laws that govern the whole, and unite so many jarring Elements, in carrying on the great Busines of Nature. He can discover not only Art, infinite Power and Wisdom, but transcendent Goodness in all and every Part of the universal System ; the Earth, the Heavens, the Sea, and all Objects subject to his Senses, proclaim their great Creator good, Goodness in the End, infinite Goodness in the Means, and ultimate Happiness to all existing Beings, the only Object of his mighty Power. The further he searches into the Recesses of Nature, and endeavours to explore her hidden Secrets, he discovers new Objects of Amazement, a new Display of Goodness, and fresh Subject of Adoration. To a Mind then, divine *Selima*, thus employed, capable of tasting the sublime Joy resulting from such Contemplation, and justly grateful to its Creator for those Faculties, which enables it to discover that never failing Fountain of eternal Pleasure ; of how little Consequence is the Loss of all sublunary

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Enjoyment ; it is true, to a Soul filled with Benevolence, Love of Mankind, and Love of his Country, it must be painful to reflect, that by the Frowns of Fortune, and the Prevalence of successful Villany, he is deprived of the Means of exerting his natural Powers and Faculties, for the Benefit of his Species, and the Good of his native Country ; but to counterbalance this ungrateful Reflection, he has only to consider, that all Things are guided by the Hand of unerring Wisdom and infinite Goodness ; that all Events, however sinister they may appear to short-sighted erring Mortals, are written in the everlasting Book of Fate, and designed to produce some future Good, some new Scene of Wonder, and fresh Motives of Adoration to the Faithful ; the Thought that nothing can happen by Chance, that nothing is guided by an evil or malicious Principle, and that every Thing that is, is best, must calm our Fears, allay our Anxiety, and teach us, like true Believers, an unlimited and cheerful Resignation to the predestined Decrees of the divine Will *. But further, Madam,

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* The *Mahometans*, through all their Sects, embrace Predestination in it's most unlimited Sense, and are no ways solicitous about reconciling that Doctrine to Free will, of which they have no Apprehension ;

the good Man, tho' in Adversity, has no Cause to despise, which is the Reverse of Fortitude, since he cannot charge himself with being the Cause of his Misfortunes. If the Evils that oppress him are natural, it is a Debt he owes the Species, they are the natural Consequences of his Make as a Man ; if they proceed from the Malice of others, and not from wrong Elections of his own ; he knows he is not answerable for their Consequences, and may feast himself with the joyful Reflection, that he has done his Duty, to the best of his Knowledge and Judgment ; and that if he meets not with a Reward in this Life, he is entitled to the Reward promised by our Prophet to all faithful Mussulmen, and such as have obeyed the Precepts contained in the sacred Versicles, in that heavenly Paradise where our Delight can have no Bounds.

sion ; therefore it is no Wonder, to find our Dervise alledge it as a Motive, to keep us from Despondency, under the Frowns of adverse Fortune. Upon Supposition that this Doctrine is true, the Use here made of it is very natural, and will be equally quieting, even to a Mind who acknowledges only a general Providence, since upon that Supposition they must believe, that all contingent Events, in all possible Cases, must turn out for the general Good of the universal System ; and consequently of theirs, as they are a Part of the great Whole.

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These Reflections, Madam, cannot only support a great King under the deepest Affliction, but are in their own Nature applicable to the Circumstances of the meanest Slave. There is no Condition of Life, which debars us the Enjoyment of these divine Comforts ; it is a Balm that is dispensed by the bountiful Creator to all the Sons of Men ; it is a Medicine that costs nothing, nor can be monopolized by the greatest Monarch on Earth. No Torments, no Pain, no Sickness, nor any Species of natural or moral Evil is Proof against this sovereign Antidote. It is a Shield, a Fence against all Calamity ; and a Mind thus armed, might sing Hallelujahs to his great Creator amidst scorching Flames, and all the Torments the most malicious and cunning Tyrant can invent.

This, Madam, is Fortitude in Adversity, this is Magnanimity in dark Colours ; yet how amiable does it appear ? How resplendent its glorious Rays, even among the gloomy Horrors of Death and Misery ; its Radiancy is here more conspicuous, and makes it appear with greater Lustre, than in the Pomp of gaudy Prosperity ; but there is a Counterfeit of this Species of Fortitude, which by the undiscerning Multitude is often mistaken for the real Disposition ; a certain Stupidity of Nature, a dead,

dead, lifeless Calm of Temper, flowing from the Crisis of the Blood, and an Insanity of Mind: A mere Absence of Thought is frequently presumed to be the Effect of Fortitude; tho' this Disposition is really the Reverse of that rational Affection, it is purely owing to the Mechanism of our Bodies, to a senseless Numbness in the Organs of Sensation, and a vicious Laziness in the mental Principles; there is no more Beauty in such a Behaviour, than in the Effects of Opiate, a Man might as rationally take a composing Draught of that noble Medicine, and pretend, that his Stupefaction was the Effect of a moral Habit; these heavy lumpish Constitutions have their Veins filled with narcotick Juices, and labour under the Malady of a perpetual Letthargy, both of Body and Soul. The best Criterion to judge, whether that Calmness of Temper under Calamities is the Result of rational Fortitude, or purely a Constitutional Insensibility, is to observe if or not the Agent pursues rational Means to free himself from the present Pressure; if he neglects any Thing in his Power to give him Ease, or does not pursue his Schemes steadily, pointing to some certain Conclusion, and is diverted from his Pursuits by every common Disappointment; if so, we may conclude, that his seeming Calm is owing to

an Error in his Frame, and not to any rational Conviction ; that such a Behaviour is most consistent with his Dignity, as a Man most conducive of his Interest, and the best suited to his present Circumstances.

There is another Species of counterfeited Fortitude, another Disposition of Mind, which assumes the outward Marks of that heroick Virtue, and yet is nothing of Kin to it. The last we mentioned proceeded from natural Insensibility of the Organs, and a lifeless Inactivity of the virtuous Affections, supposing them existent in the Agent : But this last I am now to mention proceeds from a total Absence of all moral Sense, from an Insensibility of Conscience, and a Mind hardened in the Habit of Vice and Wickedness, an utter Contempt, or total Ignorance of all good Affections. Such is the Fortitude discovered by Criminals, and Persons convict of the most atrocious Crimes. We see some of these Wretches bear the Tortures of the Rack with surprising Constancy, affect Serenity in the midst of the most excruciating Torments, and look Death itself in the Face, tho' dressed in all the Pomp of judicial Horror, with Intrepidity. This by some may be mistaken for true Fortitude, or Greatness of Soul, but the Poles are not more Distant than this Disposition of

of Mind, and that noble Passion. This Wretch braves his Misfortunes through Pride, and with Intention to give the World an Opinion of his Courage, and is enabled to affect this Temper with greater Ease, as he has hardened his Conscience, and quelled its Reflections, by a continued Habit of Sin and Mischief ; or if he has not, (as it is scarce possible to destroy all Sense of Good in the human Mind *) his Calm is only meer Show and out-side.

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* Our Dervise very judiciously observes, that it is scarce possible to contract such a Habit of Vice, as to destroy all Sense of Good, or to stifle totally the Pangs of Conscience. It has been always admitted by Moralists, to be as difficult to find a Man absolutely vicious, as one absolutely good, and therefore I am apt to ascribe some Part of the intrepid Behaviour of Criminals to some Remains of Goodness, as well as to Insensibility of Conscience ; for even suppose Love of Fame is one Motive of their Suffering, with seeming Serenity, that very Love of the Esteem of Mankind, argues some Sense of social Virtue, tho' they take a preposterous Way to obtain it ; and next we have many Instances where they have born the most agonizing Torments, rather than become Informers against their Fellows, or betray the Secrets of their Fraternity. This argues a strong Sense of moral Justice and Integrity, and that they have set certain Bounds to their Wickedness ; that there is a certain Species of Evil so black, which they cannot commit ; and indeed if it is possible to suppose a Man totally lost to all Sense of moral Good, and a meer Demon in his Nature ; it must be that Wretch who first tempts his Fellow Creatures to sin, and

the interior Man is in an Uproar, all within is Horror and Confusion. But I must break off this Letter, my dear *Isabella*, I am interrupted by an unseasonable Attack of the Head-ach: These natural Evils are necessary in human Nature, to put us in Mind of Mortality; they are ordained by Providence, to keep us in continual Remembrance of our Dependance on the supream Being, to mortify our growing Pride, by putting us in Mind of our natural Want and Imbecillity, and how utterly uncapable we are of subsisting, without the continued Assistance of his beneficent Hand, who first breathed into us the Breath of Life, as well as to give us a higher Relish of the great Blessings of Health or Strength; for without these little Intervals of Sicknes, Health itself would cloy our changeable Natures, and we should not be so sensible of his merciful Dispensations. Mayest thou, my Child, be always a Stranger to Sicknes, but above all, mayest thou be able to read the Designs of our great Creator, when he visits us with Adversity, and profit by those Instructions he gives you in Affliction; mayest thou enure thy Mind to think of Misfortunes with Calmness and Indifference,

and then betrays them to Punishment. This is Vice in the Abstract, and the only Notion we can form of a Demon.

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that thou mayst be found possessed of that rational Fortitude, that heroick Magnanimity, which the good Dervise recommends, when the Day of Adversity approaches thee. Adieu,

Constantinople the 14th

Day of the 2d Moon.

SELIMA.

L E T T E R XXVII.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

MY dear *Isabella*, the slight Indisposition I complain'd of in my last need not alarm you, it soon vanished, and I found it but the Effect of Vapours more than any real Disorder, a Disease that is chiefly of our own creating, a meer imaginary Ill, which passes the Skill of the Physician, and scorns to be regulated by the common Rules of the medical Art. What strange Creatures, my dear *Isabella*, are we Mortals, especially the Female Part of us: Our Joys, our Griefs have

scarce any Foundation in Nature ; our very Beings seem a mere Chimera, a Dream, a Vision, a Body of Air : We have so many imaginary Evils attending us, either sleeping or waking, that it would puzzle a Philosopher to determine, whether the Life of Women, (as we generally are) is most real or visionary : It's certain that those Evils arising from a depraved imagination are more numerous, and in some Degree more tormenting, than most natural Evils incident to the human Body ; but if we had a just Sense of the Dignity of our Natures, and were truly solicitous to employ these ample Powers and natural Faculties, with which we are endued, to their proper Uses, we should not have Time to think of, or create to our selves those visionary Ills, which haunt the Lazy and Indolent, and bring upon them that Languor of Mind, and Stupidity of Thought, which degenerates into Spleen and Vapours : But not to detain thee from the wise Discourse of the Dervise, he proceeded as follows. This, sublime *Sultana*, is one of the general Divisions of Fortitude, that Branch of it which is practised in Adversity. Your Slave shall next make a Tour through the prosperous World ; we have seen it shining through dark Misery ; let us view it in the Splendor of a Court,

Court, amidst the Acclamations of a gaping Multitude, a Sphere of Life where Virtue meets with the greatest Difficulties, and the most numerous Crowd of powerful Enemies without.

In the last Scene Fortitude had but to conquer our selves, the inward Enemies, but now she has to deal with those that are without ; in Adversity we are sometimes obliged to practise Virtue out of Necessity, we must put the best Face on Things they can bear, since we cannot better them, and we may endeavour to get the better of our Passions, when we have nothing wherewithal to gratify them ; but in Prosperity, when the Appetites are keen, and fired with the high Relish of present Enjoyment, when each Passion sues to be employed in the grand Business of Pleasure, and offers generously to contribute their Quota, to encrease the Sum of our Happiness ; when we have it in our Power, by all the Force of Omnipotent Money, to employ them all, then the Conquest is truly noble ; then true Magnanimity is in its Zenith of Glory : When I can be temperate in the Midst of Affluence, chast in the Heat of boiling Blood, and Objects still in View ; when I can curb the Insolence of Power, when backed with Legions, and cloath

my self with Modesty, amidst the Acclamations of Millions of Subjects made happy by my Wisdom ; then, and not till then, I can be said to possess real Fortitude.

This, Madam, is the general Mark of Heroism in Prosperity ; but we must now consider it under some other Divisions. We may distinguish it into several Kinds, according to the different Situation of the Agent : first we are to view it in civil but active Life, next in a military Capacity, then in a philosophick Dress, and last of all, as it mixes itself with the common Concerns of the Bulk of Mankind ; but first of all let me premise, that in whatever Station of Life we are to view it, that next to the Government and Moderation of all the Passions in general *, and the Suppression of all vicious

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* Here the Dervise would insinuate, that Excess even in the most virtuous Affections, is opposite to the Nature of Magnanimity ; and in this he is certainly consistent with Reason, for we see, that Excess of the greatest Virtue, even those that are called cardinal, degenerate at least into Weakness, if not into Vices. Too great Benevolence dwindleth into womanish Pity, checks the natural Course of Justice, and disables the Agent from many Acts really good, because they carry the Air of Severity or Harshness

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Habits whatever, Magnanimity consists in a judicious Application of our natural Faculties to their proper Uses, and in the Pursuit of those Measures, that are most likely to conduce to the great Happiness of Society: For it is impossible to suppose, that we can have a just Sense of our own Worth, or a true Understanding of our Abilities, if we do not conceive, that they were bestowed for some End, for some wise Purpose, in forwarding our own Happiness, and that of the general System. These Powers we must know are designed to be drawn out into Action, and properly applied; Virtue can never consist in unactive Indolence, or mere Speculation of what is fitting, consequently the truly magnanimous Spirit must display his Fortitude in his Election of such Objects of his Power, as are of most general and extensive

to a few; Courage, when carried into Extreams, degenerates into Temerity, and often provokes to Cruelty, and, generally speaking, hurries the Possessor into Measures, if not destructive, at least dangerous to his Peace, for want of due Consideration: In a Word, all Extreams are vicious; and the Boundaries of Good and Evil are so near one another, that but a Line divides them. The golden Mean is what all ought to aim at, and what our Dervise chiefly inculcates in the Government of the Passions.

Good, he must prefer publick Affection to private Friendship, and the Happiness of a whole Community, to the Interest of a smaller Number, and Proportion his Favours to the Circumstances and Exigencies of Parties, and his own Abilities, avoiding Excess or Extream in all his Actions ; but to proceed to our last general Division of prosperous Fortitude.

A Person situate in high Life, and possessed of Abilities to serve the Publick, in the Management of publick Affairs, displays his Fortitude when he Discharges the Duties of his Function, in Matters of Difficulty and Danger, as well, and with as great Chearfulness, as in a dead Calm of State. There are Numbers of People who love to be Statesmen, when Success seems to attend on publick Affairs, and every Thing carries a prosperous Aspect ; but when Storms, and political Tempests arise, when Trouble, Faction, and Discord disturb the publick Tranquillity, then they sneak off, and leave the Helm to the more hardy, as Rats are said by Instinct, to leave a sinking Ship ; but this betrays a dastardly, selfish, groveling Spirit ; the truly magnanimous Soul chuses such Scenes to act in, he knows a meer Bungler may guide the Ship of State in

a Calm, but that it requires a skilful Pilot to conduct her in a Hurricane ; then, he exposes himself with Pleasure, without any other Hopes of Reward, but the Pleasure of reflecting, that he has served his Country in a Time of publick Calamity : Such a Man, and at such Seasons, must be above the Effects of Calumny, and have an utter Contempt of publick Fame. In a Time of publick Distress, the Generality of the People are peevish in their Dispositions, their Misfortunes sour their Tempers ; and as they are incapable of tracing their Calamities to their natural Source, they are apt to snarl at their Governors, and impute every Thing that happens to their Treachery or Mismanagement. The very Means their Rulers take to free them of their Fears and Anxieties naturally produce Aversion ; publick Troubles increase publick Expence ; this creates new Taxes and Impositions. However necessary these are in themselves, yet the People are not in a Humour (if they were capable) of discerning the Utility and Expediency of such Measures ; therefore they quarrel with their Governors as the Patient does at a Physician or Surgeon, who gives them Pain to procure them future Ease. Those then at the Helm in such ticklish

Times, must have wrought themselves up to a thorough Contempt of publick Defamation ; they must wrap themselves up in the Consciousness of their own Innocence, and the Approbation of their own Judgment and Conscience. This requires a large Degree of Fortitude, for as much as the Love of Fame is natural, and when pursued by honest Means, the most laudable Ambition that fires the Human Soul. Now, to conquer this Passion, and court Hatred instead of Love, Infamy, Reproach and Calumny instead of merited Fame, requires a superlative Degree of Benevolence ; for nothing but that amiable Passion, ingrafted with Fortitude, can support a Mind under such untoward Circumstances ; but the magnanimous Man, as he knows his own Abilities, and has not overvalued them, must be morally certain, that he has chosen such Measures as in the End will conduce to the Happiness of the People, and consequently, when the Scene comes to its final Catastrophe, that his Glory must shine with greater Lustre, and that even the Herd, who only judge by their present Feeling, will make him ample Amends for all their unseasonable Reproaches ; this Reflection enables him to pursue his Measures

tures with Steadiness and Alacrity, always preferring the publick Interest and Honour to his own private Fame and Satisfaction. This obliges the really wise Man to allow himself for some time even to be esteemed a Coward, a Villain, a Traitor, when those Actions, which give Ground to these Surmises, are productive of the publick Good ; not that the Man of Fortitude and true publick Spirit is obliged to make free with his Honesty, on any Occasion, or to merit in Reality these odious Epithets to serve his Country ; but that he is not to shun such Actions as are in themselves truly virtuous, because the short-sighted Vulgar, or such as are ignorant of the Springs of Action, may be led to put that malicious Construction upon them.

What, Madam, your Slave has said upon this Species of civil Fortitude may be applied to Cases in less elevated Life, and serve as a Criterion to judge of true Fortitude almost in every Circumstance ; but we shall view this amiable Passion in the Field, a Scene where the Generality of Mankind expect Fortitude to exist in a particular Manner, and in some Measure consider that as its proper Province ; but I have made it appear to your Highness, that this extensive Virtue is as necessary in the Cabinet, as in the Field,

Field, and may be exercised with much greater Advantage to the Society in the former ; and you may understand from the Sequel, that military Fortitude may be much easier counterfeited, than any other Species of that Virtue.

Courage is the chief Ingredient of this Kind of Magnanimity, which, if real, proceeds from the same Motives, as we have been treating of in civil Fortitude, that is, true Courage is rational, and proceeds from a just Notion of our own Powers, and a proper Discernment of the best Uses to which our natural Abilities may be applied, and a clear Perception of the Nature and Finess of Things ; consequently, when a Man of this Stamp is to make his Election of any two or more Actions, he considers what his Abilities are, if or not he is naturally capable of executing any of them, which of them is most conducive to the proposed End, which must always bear an equal Proportion to the Danger run. Thus, if he considers, that the Thing proposed cannot be executed without exposing his Life to the most imminent Danger, and that the Good accruing to the Publick is superior to his private Loss ; he generously and undauntedly risks his Person, but no fur-

ther than the Duties of his Place require ; one Step further is Temerity, and one Degree less is Cowardice ; but the Medium is true rational Courage or military Fortitude. Here I would be understood to mean, that an utter Contempt of Death, or risking one's Person, without honest and reasonable Motives, has nothing of true Fortitude in it, but that the truly courageous Man must be convinced, that the Cause he engages in is strictly virtuous ; he must know the Value of the End proposed, and the just Worth of his own Life, which I have elsewhere expressed, by understanding the Nature and Fitness of Things, that he may be able to judge if they are to be opposed to one another. This deliberating is far from deserving the Name of Fear or Cowardice, but is rational Magnanimity, such as Man only can boast of ; all beyond this is brutal Fierceness, and the Effect of meer Mechanism ; and without we suppose this Deliberation to precede every Action, we must admit, that the Agent acts by meer Impulse, and that there is nothing moral in the Action.

It was of this Species of Courage, without rational Motives, the late *Charles of Sweden* was possess'd : That mad Mon-

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narch never considered the Justice of his Cause ; if there was Danger in the Undertaking, that was sufficient Motive to him to risque his own Life, and that of his too loyal Subjects. He attempted Things against all moral Probability, and plunged himself into Danger, where the End was dishonourable and impossible, and the Means every Way as irrational ; as for Instance, his mad Behaviour at *Bender* ; he would attempt to stay in the Dominions of the Port, in Spite of the Sultan, contrary to all the Laws of Hospitality and Gratitude ; and to effect this End, opposed his Person, and a few Domesticks, against an Army of regular Troops. This indeed displayed an utter Contempt of Death, but had not one Ingredient of true Fortitude ; his Horse was as capable of such Courage as he, and much leis to be blamed for attempting it, as he is not supposed endued with Reason and Judgment, to discern the Nature and Fitness of Things.

However, this Kind of Courage is admired by the gaping Multitude, who cannot discern its ugly Source ; for the chief Ingredients of this Courage are Anger and Pride : The Passion of Anger sets their Blood in a Ferment, drives the finer Spirits up to the Brain, and by their

their Hurry disables the Soul from Perception of Danger, or Reflection on Causes and Consequences ; and she has no Choice left, but to follow the Dictates of Revenge. Those that are acquainted with Mankind, may easily discover, that far the greatest Part of what is ascribed to Courage is owing to this blind headstrong Passion Anger ; for whenever they discover any Signs of Courage, their Blood boils over, it flashes in their Faces, and they act without the least Sign of Rationality. Pride may likewise help us to get the better of our Fears of Death, and hurry us to Acts of Desperation. Here among the Christian Infidels is applied the Name of Coward, to any who will not punish with Death such as give the slightest Affront ; and it is common with these Barbarians, to go in calm Blood to cut one another's Throats, out of Pride of being esteemed brave, or Fear of being accounted Cowards ; they value that Kind of Fame more than their Lives, but the faithful Mussulmen have a better Notion of true Courage, they know the Value of Life, and that their Country has a greater Right to dispose of it than they ; and that as it is not their own, it is an Act of Injustice, to throw away what another

another has an Interest in, without their Consent.

Habit begets a Kind of Courage, but it is of the Bastard Sort, and that is what most military Men are possessed of: By being often exposed to Danger, it becomes habitual to them, and the Fear of Death by Degrees wears off. They have been so often in Battle, and come off, if not unhurt, at least with Life, that they really do not apprehend the Danger to be so great, as it really is; and therefore, every fresh Engagement rush on with greater Alacrity; and this makes Veterans so much the more preferable to new raised Troops; for let the greatest General on Earth speak his Mind freely, and he must own, that the first Time he went into Battle, he found his Blood run chill, and that it was either Pride, or these other rational Motives I have mentioned, which hindered him from running away: Nature starts at Death, and abhors Annihilation; but that Horror, as it is at first partly mechanical, wears off by Degrees, as the Objects of Death by Custom become more familiar; but a Man running up to the Mouth of a Cannon without Fear, or by the Help of this habitual Courage, has no Claim to Fortitude, he faces Danger, because he does not

not apprehend it, and where it is not seen or valued in its real Proportion, it is the same Thing as if it did not exist at all; and for this Reason, even what is called natural or constitutional Courage has no Kindred to Fortitude, since it proceeds from a fiery hot Disposition, the Mechanism of the Body, and Crisis of the Fluids, and is chiefly produced by Anger, and a Predominancy of Choler in their Disposition. Acts resulting from this Kind of Courage have nothing moral in them, the Agent is actuated by meer Impulse, and is no more than a Machine set in Motion, by the Action of outward Objects upon the Mass of Blood: Of Kin to this is artificial Courage, raised by spirituous Liquors, and Opiate, the Effects of which are so often seen upon our common Soldiers. This is no more to be esteemed Courage, than the Reveries of a Man in his Sleep is to be accounted Wisdom; and yet these three last Kinds of Courage I have mentioned, *viz.* habitual, constitutional, and artificial Courage, make up the Sum of military Courage, so much esteemed among the Vulgar; and we can rarely meet with, (even among the great Commanders) any Species of true rational Fortitude, otherwise we would not find such unnatural and unjust Wars prosecuted with

so much Cruelty and Inhumanity, as at present subsist in the World.

Having done, Madam, with military Fortitude, I shall only add, that this great Virtue may be practised in a Cell, in a Desert, at least perfectly removed from the Bustle and Hurry of the active World ; as when a Man addictes himself to the Study of Philosophy, with a Design to improve Mankind, and make Discoveries for the Good of Society. To this Class of Men the World owes its greatest Heroes, those Law-givers, who have polished us into civil Societies ; but it is always to be supposed, that such Men are not to secrete themselves from the World, when their Abilities are necessary in active Life ; they are not to chuse that retired Post, unless the Publick is supplied with Men of equal Abilities, or can easily dispense with their Attendance.

As for Fortitude in low Life, it may be discovered by a Man's applying himself to such Actions within his Sphere, as are of general Use, in Preference to others of a more private Concern ; and, in a Word, the truly honest Man, in whatever Station of Life he is, may be possessed of this amiable Virtue ; and when possessed of it, may be said to be virtuous in the Abstract.

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Here, my dear *Isabella*, the good Dervise ended his Discourse upon Fortitude. May'st thou, my dear Child, profit by the good old Man's Instructions; may they delight thy Heart like the pure Stream that runs through the Gardens of Paradise, and may the Practice of those Virtues make thee happy here, and at last purchase thee a Place in those delightful Mansions of eternal Bliss. Adieu my *Isabella*. Pray for thy Mother,

Constantinople the 28th
Day of the 3d Moon.

SELIMA.

LETTER XXVIII.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

AS the Water flows clear and regular from the delicious Fountain, so does the sweet Stream of Knowledge issue from the Tongue of the devout *Bedriden*; my Heart is fill'd with Gratitude, and my Soul exults with Joy towards the supreme Being, for being pleased to communicate some Share of the divine Attribute of Wisdom, lovely Wisdom, by the Lips of this good Man. With what a religious Zeal, with what an honest Fervency has he not attended to our Instruction? Has not the

Sun-shine of his Understanding, in some Measure dissipated the Clouds, which heretofore enveloped the eternal and unalterable Truths of natural Religion? With what Perspicuity and Integrity has he not taught us, that all our moral Obligations flow from our Knowledge of and Dependance on the one infinite, wise and good God? and that even Virtue has no other moral Beauty, besides Self-Preservation, but the faint Resemblance of some of his divine Attributes? We can now plainly discover in what the Defects of the ancient Philosophy consisted, tho' the practising its Rules has been aggrandized as the highest Pitch of human Perfection; yet we don't find in History, that it ever assisted one of its Followers to bear a Life of good or bad Fortune decently or like Men. I am satisfied now, that it arose from the Insufficiency of their Doctrines, to give them adequate Notions of the Wisdom and Power of the supream Being; 'tis no Doubt, as the wise Dervise observes, to the Want of such Notions, that we may ascribe that Imprudence, Injustice and Cowardise, which betrays it self in most of the Actions among the Generality of Mankind; these and the Remedies against them, have been examined under their particular Heads; the Dervise says, that many

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Moralists have set up a fourth original and cardinal Virtue, which they call Temperance or Moderation; and that if this Term be taken in the largest and most unconfined Sense of the Word, it is no other than an Idea compounded of all the other Virtues: If we apprehend it in this Light, it may be of some Use, by assisting us to carry into Execution such Precepts of the other Virtues as we already know. This, at first Sight, may appear an Office of some Difficulty. But great Sultana, says he, the Method is short and easy, 'tis only considering without Prejudice or Passion what prudent, just, or brave Men have done, or would do on the like Occasion. This Manner of proceeding would moderate our Actions, and prevent us from lapsing into Extreams, either on the one Side, or on the other; it must correct Suspicion and Credulity into Prudence, Severity and Negligence into Justice, and Rashness or Cowardise into true Courage; for all lawful and commendable Actions are temperate; Moderation considered in a restrained Sense, can only be conceived as a puny and inconsiderable Virtue; the most that can be said for it is, that the other Virtues teach and inform this to recapitulate only. The Object of restricted Temperance is the managing and

governing our natural Affections and Appetites, by the Principles of right Reason ; and do not all the other Virtues do us the like good Offices ? If the sublime Descendants of the mighty *Ottoman* had not been prudent, just and brave, moderating their Affections and Appetites, (if it is possible, as I don't suppose it is, without the Assistance of the other Virtues,) all their boasted Excellencies would, I doubt, make but a sorry Figure to Day ; the golden Mediocrity, so much recommended by all the Charms of Poetry, and Power of Eloquence, is no more than another Name for Temperance. It is not possible, that the Case of an unfortunate or prosperous Man can be so stated, as that every Difficulty may not be solved, without having Recourse to this Moderation for our Answer. If this Word be applied to Pleasure, and the governing our selves in the Pursuit of it, I am afraid its Advocates will again find, that they teach nothing which has not been taught before. Pleasure or Pain are of two Kinds, mental or corporeal, if our Pleasure be corporeal, Prudence and Justice to our selves will oblige us to restrain it within the Bounds of Reason, and Magnanimity describes the like Deportment in the severest Pain. If your sublime Highness will be at the Trouble of measuring any Case of

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mental Pleasure or Pain by this Standard, I am persuaded, that you will find the preceding Rule to hold good ; and that you will be of Opinion with me, that the Doctrine of Moderation is of no other Use, than a general Term to comprehend the other Virtues. I am sensible, divine *Selima*, continued he, that the most refined Reasonings of Mankind are as liable to Error, as they are subject to Misinterpretation : On this Account, I do not pretend, that my Precepts are infallible Guides towards the Attainment of Happiness, the ultimate End of all our Beings ; no, Madam, I speak of them only as the probable Means, and must freely own, that the Plan of moral *Œconomy*, prescribed by *Jesus* the holy Son of *Mary*, is superior to every Thing human, and can certainly boast of as strong a Title to the Spirit and Finger of the one God, as the immaculate Oracles of our great Prophet. As it is in Behalf of Truth, I shall make no Scruple, to put into your Hands the Book of the History of the Life, Precepts, and Doctrines of the Son of *Mary*, together with the Writings of some of his pious Followers : Thy faithful Slave, divine *Selima*, will return at thy imperial Command, to explain his Laws, which were reverenced and admired, even by our great Prophet. Thus

finished, my dear *Isabella*, the holy Dervise. This last Hint has awakened my Curiosity; and I am determined, on thy Account, to send again for this good Man, when Time and thy sublime Father will permit, to unravel the seeming Absurdities of the *Nazarene* Sect. May the Soul of our great Prophet enlighten thy Heart, and cherish thy Understanding. Farewell.

*Constantinople the 10th
Day of the 7th Moon.*

SELIMA.

LETTER XXIX.

SELIMA to ISABELLA.

MY dear *Selima*, after the Dervise had finished his Discourse upon our Conduct in Life, he entertained me with some general Opinions of the Ancients on that Subject, and casually mentioned *Sabes* the wise *Theban*, as one who, in an allegorical Stile, had given the most beautiful Picture of human Nature: The Character he gave of this Moralist raised my Curiosity to see some of his Writings; and the good *Bedriden* furnished me with a Translation of one of his most noted Allegories, which I send you. The Author takes, for the Basis of his Fable, a supposed Picture

in the Porch of the Temple of *Saturn*, and takes the Opportunity to explain the Hieroglyphicks contained in it to some curious Strangers, who are in the Fable supposed to relate that Conversation, and is as follows.

Amidst innumerable Offerings consecrated in the Temple of *Saturn*, though all were very wonderful in their Kind, yet one above the rest seemed to have something singularly curious, which was a mythological Picture, hung over the Porch, whose strange Figures, so very much out of common Character, left us wearying ourselves with Conjecture what Emblems were shadowed under such Representations, exhibited by a Piece of so grotesque and extraordinary a Nature.

What seemed at first View to have been either a City or a Camp, appeared upon stricter Enquiry a fine Area, containing two Courts; one considerably larger than the other. At the Gate of the Area was a vast Congress of People; within was assembled a great Company of Women: A venerable old Man stood at the Entrance of the first Portal, who, by his Countenance and Deportment, seem'd straining with Vehemence, as if he prescrib'd some necessary Rules to be observed by the Multitudes that crowded in.

Being a long Time at a Stand about the Design of the Fable, a grave, elderly Man, who perceived how we were puzzled, with an ingenious Air addressed himself to us. Gentlemen, says he, I understand you are Strangers, and consequently unacquainted with the decyphering a Picture so artificially complicated with great Variety of Invention; nor is it to be wondered that Strangers should look upon it as a whimsical Fancy, since so very few, even of the Natives of the Place, are capable of explaining the true Dignity of its Aim. This Groop I shall observe to you was not erected at the publick Charge; it's the Donation of a certain Person, who, upon his Travels some Years since, visited our City, and by his Discourse and Behaviour seem'd to be a Disciple of *Pythagoras* and *Parmenides*, a Man of immense Erudition, endued with noble Sentiments, and upon all Occasions gave the highest Instances of Humanity: It's to his Greatness of Soul, and true Strain of Piety, we stand indebted for this costly Structure, and mystical Piece of Painting, both dedicated by him to *Saturn*. Sir, said I, was this Gentleman of your Acquaintance? I was one of those that held him in the highest Esteem, and was frequently admitted to the Honour of his Conversation, which never failed being

accompanied with uncommon Improvement, though he was then but in an early Period of Life, yet, by a Sort of Miracle, he excelled in bold, masculine Expressions, as well as Strength of Argument, far above what could be expected from his Age ; and in his expounding the emblematical Figures in this Piece, he always treated it with wonderful Conciseness, Accuracy and Perspicuity. If you are entirely at Leisure, Sir, you will lay us under the highest Obligation in giving us a Dissertation upon the main Design of a Fable we are so earnestly desirous to be instructed in. He answered with great Civility, that he was absolutely at our Disposal, but was under some Apprehension, lest by unfolding the Mystery we should unwarily incur a Danger we could not foresee. What Danger, pray Sir, can possibly ensue to us, relative to your informing so natural a Curiosity ? He answered, that by a close and serious Attention to his Explication of this abstruse Mystery, that we would have our Mind and Understanding enlightened, and that Wisdom and Happiness would unexpectedly flow in upon us ; but on the other Hand, if we regarded his Discourse as mere Whimsey and Romance, our Unbelief would become its own Punishment, and we be turned into a most splenetick

positive, dogmatick, ill-natured Set of stupid Ignorants, a Curse to ourselves, and a Plague to the rest of the World ; for the explaining this Piece of Mythology is no less hazardous to the Hearers, than the endeavouring to expound the *Sphynx's* Riddle was formerly ; which, though *Oedipus* was lucky enough to succeed in, yet all that went before him perished in the unsuccessful Undertaking. The present Case is pretty much of a parallel Nature, nor less fatal in its Consequence ; Folly being a Sort of *Sphynx* to Mankind in general, and affords but an obscure Intimation of what is good or bad for us, or what is simply indifferent, and that signifies little either one Way or t'other : The Man who is thus hood-wink'd by Folly can never discover the Fallacy of his Desires, nor be able to fix them on those Objects where they ought to be preferably placed ; and though the Consequence of Folly will not be immediately perceived, yet it will most assuredly work its Effects by slow Degrees, and become an inseparable Accident, so blended with his very Essence and Being, that it is no more to be shaken off than a Malefactor under Sentence of Death can rid himself of the Dread of the approaching Hour of his Execution, which presents itself in every Thought, and

and makes him die a thousand Times over and over; But when Folly is stripped of her specious Mask, she is then destructive of herself, and her Power declines as fast as the Absurdity appears; while the Person who is so wise as to discover the Counterfeit, is raised above the Assaults of Fortune, and finds an uninterrupted Series of Happiness in his own Breast, which never ceases but with Life. I therefore most earnestly entreat, that you will awaken your Mind, and keep your Attention on the Stretch with such Affiduity and Perseverance, that not a Tittle may escape your Observation. O Heaven! what Impatience have you excited in us to be initiated into those wonderful Mysteries that are almost incredible! You will be convinced in the Course of the Conversation, that they very justly lay Claim to the most exalted Opinion you could possibly frame of them: It is a Thing of so very extraordinary a Nature, that we think even a Moment's Delay too long until we imbibe those salutary Instructions, and establish them in our Memories like Oracles. And as you have been pleased to assure us of an over-balance of Happiness to reward our most serious Attention, we shall be all Ears, nor venture to risque so fair a Prospect in

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Exchange for the fatal Consequence of so stupid a Neglect of such an inestimable Entertainment: Therefore I promise, in the Name of us all, to stand upon our Guard, and arm ourselves with determin'd Resolution, and all the Alacrity imaginable.

Upon this he pointed to the Picture with his Cane, and said, you are to understand, that by this Inclosure Life is signified, or a Stage upon which Mortals act their several Parts as Players in the Theatre. The Crowd justling for Entrance at the Gate are the People that are just coming into the World; and the old Man exalted upon an Eminence, with a Paper in one Hand, and the other extended in a Posture of Direction, is the common Genius of Mankind: This super-intending Spirit pours out his salutary Instructions, and sage Admonitions upon the never-ceasing Multitudes as they enter, thundering perpetually in their Ears those necessary Rules by which they are to conduct themselves through this Journey of Life, pointing out which Road they are to pursue if they would incline to lead a Life of Happiness on their Journey, and arrive in Safety at the End on't. I interrupted him here by an Enquiry of the particular Method he took to prescribe the great Lines of

of their Duty, and what certain Directions he laid down for the Government and Economy of Life, and how they were to manage themselves in the various Occurrences, and several Circumstances so changeable and transitory : Don't you see, says he, by the Gate where the Crowd goes in, a Woman sitting in a lolling Posture in an arm'd Chair, set off with all the Vanity and Pageantry of fine Cloaths, and carries somewhat of a Mien of Quality in her Face ? I see her with a Glass in her Hand : Pray who is she ? That is Impostor, that bubbles the World in a great Measure out of their Understandings, by disabling Men from distinguishing Appearances from Truth. Which Way does she compass her Ends ? She solicits and attacks all who pass by her, presenting them with a Nostrum of her own Composition, which has a different Effect proportionable to the Constitution that takes it. What Sort of Materials is this Draught made of ? The principal Ingredients are positive Ignorance and Error. After this blessed Potion is swallowed down, what Condition does it put their Affairs in ? They travel into Life with the utmost Hurry and Precipitation. What ! does every Body of Necessity drink of this infatuating Liquor ? Every Body takes a Glass

Glass at their first setting out in the Morning, but all don't take Brimmers ; some drink more, and some less, which is the sole Reason why Ignorance and Error have more or less Force upon the Minds of different Persons. I must farther inform you of those forward Prostitutes, rang'd within the Gate, who, though so very different from each other in their Ornaments and Persons, yet all those Harlots you may readily perceive, upon a superficial View, have the same fantastical Appearance, affected Archness of Look, and bold, impudent Air of their Profession : Their Names are *Opinion*, *Passion*, and *Pleasure*. These wanton Wenches trisk about the Crowd that enter, and tender their Service with the most engaging Complaisance, 'till their officious Courtesies binds their Slaves in Chains, who are dragg'd about in Triumph ever after : A few perhaps are promoted to Fortune, but these bear no Proportion to those who miscarry in the Enterprize. O Heavens ! what a bitter Cup must Mortals drink of ! still travelling on without knowing to what Place the Road will bring them, or the infinite Difficulties they have to encounter by the Way. Thus stands the Case, and there is no contesting the Point ; and yet all these Ladies give the

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strongest Assurances of laying down before them the best Rules they can go by, and rendering Life as compleatly happy in all its Circumstances as they themselves could wish ; but those unthinking Fools having drank too deep in Imposture's Glass, grow addle-headed, neither considering what they are, nor where they are, whilst Time hurries off apace, and they subsist upon Chance, letting those Advantages slip by them which Fortune threw in their Way. Thus they continue rambling about at a senseless, giddy Rate, and fancy they are mightily employ'd, when they are running out of themselves through the whole Course of their Lives, which has been a mere Dream and a Bubble, and leaves them nothing in the End to grasp at but Darkness and absolute Despair. Do pray, see how those Wantons fool those that came in first, and ride them at Will, 'till they fall into all the Weakness and Follies of Ignorance. But pray, what blind, distracted Woman is that, who stands upon a round Stone like a Globe ? That is Fortune, replies our sage Monitor, who has neither Eyes nor Ears, and is stark-staring mad. She ranges through every Corner of the Earth, and scatters her Favours indiscriminately, and with a wasteful Hand : As she never acts by the Rule of

of Reason all her Motions are transitory and various; she is here this Moment, and gone the next, successively raising and depressing the Spirits of unthinking Mortals: One Man's Misfortunes is still turn'd into another's Advantage; her constant Generosity running round in a Circle is such a Gift as will always admit of a Resumption. With a most violent Air of Arbitrariness, and a furious, tyrannick Countenance, she suddenly recalls her Bounties to bestow them upon new Favourites, who must quickly undergo the same Change, for Inconstancy is her only Pleasure: The Pedestal being round that she stands upon is a perfect Emblem of her Instability, and shews how vain and transitory a Thing Fortune is, and that there is no depending on her Liberalities, which are constantly rolling from one to another: Her Smiles and Promises are so palliated, and disguised by a counterfeit Mask of Sincerity, that Men are apt to imagine them genuine and invariable, 'till by fatal Experience they find all the inveigling Jilt appears in her natural Colours, and that she only gives the highest Expectations to render the Disappointment the more insupportable. Here I desired to know who the Crowd were, and what drew such infinite Multitudes about her, for she was hemm'd

hemm'd round on every Side by a strange Set of People, who all seem'd teasing her so earnestly, as if no other Object was worth their Thoughts, and that she had solely engrossed them all. To this I was answered, that these were People for the most Part of Libertine Principles, all driving at one Point in their unwearied Application to Fortune, and fatiguing her with their indiscreet Importunities for a Share of those Liberalities which she so profusely threw away. But how comes it to pass, says I, that they appear so differently affected in their Countenances, some of them are quite wild with Transport, and all in an Ecstasy, whilst others are as much cast down and dejected, complaining of their Destiny, remonstrating against Heaven, and wringing their Hands in a forlorn Despair? Those, says my Instructor, who seem so highly elated have succeeded in their Addresses to this Lady, and are her present Minions, who pay her the greatest Compliments, give her the Appellation of Good, build Temples to her Name, and worship her as a Divinity: But on the other Hand, the unhappy Wretches discarded her Favour, and dispossessed of her former Grants, these all rail at and abuse her with the basest Scurility, and stigmatize her with the Title

of bad Fortune. What are those high Advantages she has in her Power to confer, that dispose Men so entirely to her sovereign Will and Pleasure, that an absolute Breach is immediately made in all their Satisfactions if Fortune denies a Smile? In the general Opinion of the World, Wealth, Fame, Birth, Children, Principalities, imperial Power, and many other Things in the same Class are the wonderful Bounties of Fortune, which Mortals vainly imagine sovereign Blessings, and that they bring with them such an overbalance of Felicity, that none of the common Accidents of Life can possibly cowntervail. O ye immortal Powers, cry'd I! are not these choice Blessings with a Vengeance? As to that, replies our Instructor, we shall make it the Subject of a future Inquiry, which would be here too prolix and inconsistent with our present Design: Let us therefore pursue the Thread of our Story, in which I shall endeavour to explain the Fable. To this our Assent was immediately given.

Do you see, continues the Gentleman, that the Passage through this Gate, by an easy Ascent, leads into the second Court, and that there are several Women with those artificial Ornaments peculiar to Harlots, standing at the Portal? I see them very

very plainly : These are Lewdness, Luxury, Flattery, and Covetousness. What is the Meaning that they stand here staring upon those that enter with such earnest Looks ? To spy out who are the Favourites of Fortune, and are easy to be distinguished, to those they immediately make up, seeming in the highest Transports, they caress them with the tenderest Endearments, and pour out a Deluge of Compliments, extorted by that pure Merit which a first Sight they can so evidently discern in them ; then, in the most obliging Manner, beg that they will take up with an Apartment in their Habitations, where all will be their humble Servants, studious to oblige them, and render Life as easy and satisfactory as their Hearts could wish. Those who are wonderfully taken with this polite Behaviour, and flatter themselves that they are to feast upon Delicacies for ever, more, without farther Consideration are gain'd over to Libertinism, and are highly delighted with their imaginary Happiness for some small Time : But a little Experience evinces them, that there is nothing of real or solid Pleasure to be found here ; that their Invitation was palliated by a counterfeit Mark of Sincerity ; that the Entertainment was nothing but a visionary Cheat ; and that they have been mere Bubbles

bles and Dupes to their mercenary selfish Designs. The Motives of Complaint are undoubtedly just, but the Provocation has no better Expedient than this, that after they have spent all the Bounties of Fortune in Riot and Debauchery, that they are under an unavoidable Necessity to serve those very Women who ruin'd them ; and all the Indignities and Insults, so mortifying to a generous Spirit, must be swallowed and digested, without daring to shew the least Resentment upon the highest Provocation. They must submit to the most servile Drudgery, nor stick at any Villainy ; they must turn common Cheats, Pick-pockets, break their Trust, perjurè themselves, or commit even Sacrilege, and rob the Gods if Occasion serves. And thus they continue in one Course of Impiety and Wickedness 'till they are openly detected, and delivered over to publick Justice. Pray what is the Punishment assign'd in this Case ? You may perceive a little Door opening into a narrow Dungeon, where are several dirty loathsome Creatures all in Tatters : She with the Whip in her Hand is called Discipline, she with her Head crouch'd betwixt her Knees is Grief, and she that tears her Hair up by the Roots is Pain. But pray, says I, who is that deformed, ill-
look-

looking Skeleton of a Fellow, without so much as one Rag to cover his Nakedness, and exactly tallying with him that equivalent Female Figure, who, if one might guess by her Beauty, may very well pass for his Sister? You have hit upon their Affinity exactly: He is complaining Sorrow, and she forlorn Despair. To these blessed Comforters those rake-helly Spendthrifts are delivered, where they are mortified indeed to some Purpose, and after they have passed through this probationary Course of Discipline, they are transmitted to a Prison even worse than the former, where the last Dregs of an unhappy Life is spun out in Variety of Wretchedness, unless by a seasonable Repentance they manifest an Abhorrence for their past Follies, and promise a steady Adherence to the Rules of Reason and Wisdom for the future, as the only Guides and Directors to all true Purposes and Significancy of Life. If Fortune should haply send this Lady to any of these miserable Wretches, she strait knocks off his Shackles, releases him from Confinement, and furnishes him with a new Set of Notions and Desires, which open the Spring of true Knowledge, and chalks out the Road to that true Felicity which no Contingencies can disturb. When Men have thus set

out, they must beware lest they be pick'd up on the Way by pretended Learning, which borders so near upon the true, that though they are widely different, and Things quite separate in their Nature, yet are the Limits not easily distinguish'd, and very often in Search of true Knowledge Men get within the Verge of Sophistry, and vain pretended Learning, so that the Direction is not always an infallible Rule to go by: What then must follow in this Case? He who keeps the right Road, and arrives at the Fountain of pure Wisdom, and drinks of her inspiring Waters, he is prefected by them, his Head is purg'd of all the Errors and false Principles he had formerly imbibed, they operate on his Judgment, never let him be beaten off his Reason, keep him from making a false Step in his Busines, and render the whole Course of his Life calm, regular, easy, and prosperous; but should he unluckily mistake the Road, pretended Learning hangs out her false, glittering Lamp, that like a Will-o'-the Wisp leads him a wild Goose Chace God knows whither. O Heavens, said I! what a great and dangerous Risque is here to be run again? But I beg of you to let me know what are the Characteristicks by which this pretended Learning is to be distinguish'd? Don't you see, replies he,
that

that farther Court, and don't you also perceive a Woman in the Porch genteely dress'd, with an uniform Countenance, quite sedate and compos'd: Now the Generality of the World are deceived by this solemn Air of Gravity and Consideration, which is all Pretence and Grimace, and often impose her upon the more ignorant Part of Mankind for a Lady of surprising Genius. It's common for those whose Understanding is developp'd of the Cloud of Errors it was immers'd in, whilst they drive along the Road to true Knowledge, to bait at her Counterfeit Palace, by the Way. Is this the only Road they can take, and must they unavoidably make her their Hostess on the Journey? There is a Method of arriving at the Seat of Wisdom without touching upon her. I must further enquire of you who those Men are that walk to and fro within the Court? These, says he, are all Admirers of the counterfeit Lady, who pay their Addresses to her, fancying all the Time that they pay their Devotions to the real Person of true Knowledge under this counterfeit Appearance. Who are these pray, who suffer themselves to be gull'd and imposed upon at such an unaccountable Rate? There are vast Numbers of all Classes of People, says he, who are thus bubbled by this sham

Mistress: Here are Poets, Orators, Logicians, Musicians, Mathematicians, Astrologers, Epicureans, Peripateticks, and your Criticks, who love to play upon Words, with many others who might fwell the Catalogue to an enormous Size. If I am not mistaken there are Women running up and down in this inner Court, who have a very near Resemblance to Debauchery, and the rest of her Tribe, which you shew'd us but just before. Pray who are these? They are the very Ladies you mention. What do they come in hither too? They sometimes make an Incursion into this Court, but the first is their Place of chief Residence. Does Opinion with her fantastical Train also ply here? Yes, here they all rendezvous together, for the Dose Imposture gave those Sparks at their first setting out is not entirely work'd off, so that Ignorance and Folly are close Comitants with them still, nor will false Opinions, and vain Desires be ever eradicated out of their Minds, 'till they first get rid of pretended Learning, which can be done no other Way than by entering into a thorough Course of Physick, and so purge off all those noxious and inveterate Prejudices contracted by Conceit and Ignorance, and other vicious Habits, from which, when once recovered, they then enjoy

enjoy the happy Fruits of their Conquest in the full Felicity of all rational Pleasures, and are plac'd above the Reach of future Contingencies ; but as long as they are under the Dominion of pretended Learning, Folly and Ignorance will ever have the Ascendant, and there will be no Remedy found for their Relief, nor will all the fine Notions imbib'd from this Fountain ever tend to the Improvement of Reason, nor the Benefit of Society ; for whilst those false Principles are perpetually predominant, they must of Necessity play the same Pranks over again, and never be able to repel their Attacks. Which is the certain Road then that leads to the Seat of Knowledge ? Do you see, says he, yonder Eminence, that is quite desert and uninhabited ? And do you see a little narrow Gate, with Grass growing before it, as if it was entirely unfrequented, the Way that leads to it being very steep and craggy, and difficult of access, very few will be at the Pains of tugging up Hill to arrive at so toilsome a Situation ? I perceive all this, said I, very easily : The Hill is vastly high, the Path very narrow, with a dreadful Precipice on each Side. This is the Road that leads to true Knowledge, and to speak ingenuously, it presents a very discouraging Prospect. You may observe two Women of

of a robust Constitution, with Health and Vigour in their Countenances, standing on the Summit of the Mountain, and in a bending Posture stretching out their Hands with an earnest Inclination to lend their Assistance: I see them, says I; pray who are they? They are Sisters, says he, one is Temperance, and the other Patience. But why do they extend their Hands with such seeming Eagerness? They do it with a View of encouraging those who are inclined to go forward, but stop in the Way, half overcome by the Difficulties they meet with, whilst these are perpetually calling out to them, and exhorting them to push forward, and never slacken their Pace, nor let any Extremity make them give Way, or despair of attaining their Journey's End, exciting them at the same Time to exert their Strength to the utmost Perseverance; letting them know, that if they will but hold out a little longer, the highest Rewards will most assuredly recompence the Pains they at present undergo; for the Fruition will more than counterpoise the unpleasing Pursuit of a Place, which he who happily reaches will certainly find a perfect Elysium of all true and lasting Satisfaction in the highest Degree imaginable. But when they are arrived at the Base of the Rock that

that stands almost perpendicular, and seems inaccessible, by what Power of Magick do they contrive to climb it up? These Women, says he, descend a few Steps, and bending downward, lend those weary Pilgrims a helping Hand, and by their powerful Assistance they are enabled to surmount this last and greatest Difficulty, which serves to heighten the perfect Pleasure it procutes them. When they are arrived at this so much-desired Place of Rest, they are furnished with a fresh Supply of Strength and Spirits by their affectionate Guides, who promise to conduct them to true Knowledge, and here give them a Prospect of their future Journey, where the Eye shoots itself with Pleasure over flow'ry Lawns and verdant Meads, through which lies a smooth, delightful Road, where they may travel without the least Inconvenience, or so much as a Rub through the whole Course of their Journey, as you may plainly discern. It carries such an Appearance with it I grant you. Don't you see on this Side that lovely Grove there, a most delicious Meadow, illuminated with a most surprising Blaze of Light? This is too extraordinary an Object to escape Observation. Don't you also perceive a magnificent Edifice just in the Middle of the Field? It is very evident.

evident. Pray who are so happy as to have their Residence in a Place that seems to be but one Continuation of ravishing Pleasures? This is the Seat of the Fortunate: Here all the moral Virtues keep their Court, in whose Society and divine Conversation there is found an unspeakable Beatitude. This must undoubtedly, replies I, be a Felicity only second to what the Gods enjoy, and is an Anticipation of it here below. Don't you also perceive, said he, close by the Gate an elderly Matron, of a most agreeable Countenance, quite tranquil and compos'd, her Dress plain and neat, despising all superficial Decorations: She is not, you see, tottering upon a Globe, but stands stedfast upon a square Stone that remains immoveable, and on each Side of her stand two young Women, who one may very well guess by their Features and Complexion to be her Daughters. This Matron then you are to understand is Knowledge, the two Ladies are Truth and Persuasion: But under Favour, says I, what is the Difference betwixt standing on a round or a square Pedestal? The latter significantly sets forth the Immobility of her Posture, which is a lively Emblem of the Steadiness of her Disposition, not subject to Change, nothing flashy and volatile in her Humour,

Humour; as she bestows her Favours discriminately, and with Judgment, so they never admit of Revocation. What are the Bounties she confers upon her Votaries? She endues them with a pure and undaunted Confidence, never to be shaken or affrighted with the worst that can happen, having a full Assurance, and intire Satisfaction of an uninterrupted Felicity as long as they live. This is indeed an inestimable Blessing. But why does she stand without the Gate? To purge them from that stupid Ignorance they were drench'd with, and when the Potion she prescribes them has sufficiently operated and cleans'd them of their former Fancies and vain Opinions, and made them give them all up again; she immediately permits them to enter, and introduces them to the Virtues. This Account does not seem quite clear and intelligible to me. I shall endeavour, says he, to illustrate it by a familiar Example: 'Tis just the same as when a Patient puts himself under the Care of a Physician; the first necessary Step in the Circumstances of the Operation is an Endeavour to remove the Cause of the Disease, and discharge the peccant Humours by Sudorificks, Purgations, or some other Expedient; and when this is once effected, the Malady immediately vanishes, and the Man is reinstated in his pristine Health and

Vigour: But should the Patient refuse to follow the Regimen laid down for him, and instead of paying a due Regard to the Skill and Experience of the Doctor, and be directed by his own Caprice, and take nothing but what is palatable, submitting himself to Chance, must not you necessarily conclude such a Person is in a fair Way to dye? Now, Sir, said I, you speak very intelligibly: The Cascis exactly the same betwixt Philosophy and her Pupil, she presently feels his Pulse, pulls him all asunder, strips him to the Soul, and whatever evil Qualities she perceives incorporated in his Constitution, she purges them quite away, and by this Means brings a great deal of Vanity to Light, which being ashamed to shew its Face, shrinks away, and leaves the Mind sound and healthy, and fit to receive the divine Precepts that are to enlighten its intellectual Faculties. What are those vitiated Qualities so destructive in their Consequences which you say a large Dose of Learning so effectually sweeps away? They are Ignorance, Error, Pride, Voluptuousness, Intemperance, Anger, Avarice, and the rest of that pernicious Tribe with which Imposture drench'd him so plentifully at entering the first Court. After a thorough Purgation, whither does she send him? He is then licensed to enter this last Court, and is introduced

duced to Science, who leads all the Virtues in her Train. Pray what are those Virtues? Don't you see within the Gate a Parcel of amiable Ladies, adorn'd with a serene, modest Behaviour, neither dress'd up with wanton Curls, nor any of those artificial outward Ornaments, which are the manifest Indications of a deprav'd Mind? I see them, said I. Pray what are their Names? The first is Knowledge, and the rest, who are all her Sisters, are Fortitude, Justice, Probity, Sobriety, Modesty, Liberality, Chastity, and Benevolence. These, surely, must be the beautifullest of all Women. O Sir, said I, Words are not able to express the future Hopes you raise in my Breast from Prospects so delightful. If, said he, your Understanding receives any Improvement by what I have related to you, and you are determinately resolved to carry it into Practice, you will find, that your strongest Expectations will have answerable Returns made them, and that your Hopes have not been in vain: The bare Thought of Neglect in so essential a Point carries such Scandal and Infamy with it, that I am almost stung to Madnes at the imaginary Imputation. I hope you will strike in with the present Opportunity of establishing your future Felicity, by being Proof against Folly; and as you are sufficiently aware on't, I presume, Gentlemen, said he, you will be able to stand
your

your Ground. But whither do these Ladies carry their new Converts? To their Mother, whose Name is Felicity. And what Commission is she invested with? Do you see that Path leading to the Mount, on which stands a Citadel for the Security of the three Courts? In the Porch a Lady, with an immortal Bloom in her Countenance, sits upon a lofty Throne, her Dres quite genteel, but not fantastical, but the Crown upon her Head is exquisitely beautiful, and not more wonderful for its Richness than the Elegance of its Device, and this, said he, is Felicity. What peculiar Office is annex'd to her, or how does she treat the Person presented to her? She crowns him with a Crown communicative of her own Beatitude, and all the Virtues do the same, so that he looks like that Conqueror at the Olympic Games, who was smother'd under a Pile of flowery Chaplets. But what mighty Victory has he obtain'd, that can entitle him to such a Profusion of Honours? The greatest, replies he, of all Victories; the subduing his irregular Passions, which were so many furious wild Beasts that held him under an intire Subjection to their brutal Lusts and Desires, and the Liberty arising from such an abject Servitude, as it is the most delightful, so it is the most glorious; and now those domineering Tyrants are Slaves

to him in the same Degree he was formerly to them, for he keeps them only to administer a Kind of Jest to his higher Pleasures when he is disposed to give Nature a Relaxation and keep her from sleeping over her Philosophy. My Curiosity, says I, is awakened to the highest Degree to learn what Kind of Monsters these must be. Ignorance and Error, says he, marches in the Front, and there are not upon Earth two Beasts more baneful to Mankind than strong Prejudices, and confident Mistakes, which make Men mismanage their Affairs, and put them upon a great many incongruous and unwarrantable Actions: Then comes Grief, Pain, Covetousness, Intemperance, and all the whole Forces of Vice and Immorality in the Rear, all put to Flight, and driven out of the Field by his invincible Fortitude. The wonderous Work, says I, that is made about *Hercules's* mighty Labours, is nothing in Competition with this divine Virtue. But, under Favour, Sir, what Advantage can this Champion gain from wearing this triumphal Crown, for I can't see that it can be more than a Piece of ornamental Pageantry? I can assure you, replies he, that there is a most surprising Virtue infused into the Person who wears it, raising him to such an overtowring Height of Felicity as is far above the Assault of Malice, or

common Accidents, and like a brazen Wall repels the Darts of Fortune that return blunted against herself: And thus he finds an Happiness within himself absolute and independent, neither subject to Accidents, nor the Control of others. This is really glorious Victory, and well worth boasting of. But whither does the Hero go, or in what new Exploits does he signalize himself to preserve the Lustre of his Crown from fading away? The Virtues receive him again, and re-conduct him to the Place where they first took him up, and here they evince him of the scandalous wretched Life unthinking Mortals lead, the absurd Temerity of their Actions, and how egregiously they play the Fool, most liable still to be impos'd upon where they are most deceiv'd, some being led away by Debauchery, some by Arrogancy, and others by Ambition and Avarice, and they are such absolute Slaves, that they drag their Masters Chains perpetually, and are tied to the Oar for Life, never being able to make their Escape hither, because they either neglected the Advice the Genius gave them, or involuntarily lost the Road to true Happiness. All this, says I, is probable enough; but I own myself at a Loss to account for the Virtues leading this happy Man to the Place from whence

whence he came: This is done for his stronger Confirmation, that he may now visibly see that Deformity in others which he was incapable of observing whilst he himself was abused by Error and Ignorance, and insensible of Reproach. A Person who is once wholly convinc'd is half reform'd, and has already made considerable Advances towards a thorough Reformation: This Case is his exactly, for his Understanding lay a long Time absorb'd behind a Cloud, incapable of discerning between moral Qualities and the Nature of Good and Evil, which made him agree with the Multitude in a wrong Choice, 'till upon pure Conviction, and by the mere Force of Truth, he became convinced of the Follies and Miseries of the Generality of Mankind, and has gain'd a competent Knowledge of what constitutes a perfect and lasting Satisfaction, and has learned to give the Preference to Things according to their Dignity and Worth. After he has made this Experiment are his Faculties regulated accordingly, or what are the Occupations which principally engross his Time? He is quite free, and Master of himself; for let him go where he will he can receive no Damage, but is always in a State of Happiness, out of the Reach of Fear and Anxiety, and is as safe as a Ship in a Harbour, and his Company will be as acceptable

ceptable to all Ranks of People as the Visit of a Doctor is to a Patient who has the highest Opinion of his Abilities, and hopes for Life from his Prescriptions. Is he, says I, intirely out of any further Danger from those ravenous Beasts of Prey, from whose devouring Jaws he so luckily made his Escape? He has nothing left to dread from that Quarter any more, for he has disabled them all, and neither Pain, Poverty, Intemperance, Avarice, nor any of those infesting Harpies will be able to make any Impression on his Mind, or throw him out of his Satisfaction; he is now impregnable to all the battering Engines or Assaults that all the Enemies to Virtue can play against him; and though it is observable that the larger Serpents constantly prey upon the less, yet where one has been bitten by another, it is a certain Preservative, and none will dare venture upon him ever after, knowing very well that he is now fortified by a superior Poison that is a -counter Antidote against theirs; so is this Man who has drank plentifully of the pure Fountain of Sound Learning, furnished with a counter Charm by Wisdom and Knowledge against all the Attacks of Ignorance and Folly.

As your Generosity has hitherto indulged me in a Manner most agreeable to my

my Wishes, I will not stand upon Formalities, nor make any Excuse for asking you who are those descending the Hill? Some of them have Crowns on their Heads, and Joy brightning their Eyes; others put on a sorrowful dejected Brow, that throws a Gloom all around them, looking like Men thunder-struck, all maim'd and batter'd, and seem as if they were Prisoners guarded by a Crowd of Women. Those who are crowned, says he, have arrived safe at the Seat of Philosophy, in whose Conversation they have discovered so many desirable Excellencies, that they are quite enamour'd with her; but they whose Brows are not bound with victorious Laurels, have been rejected by her, for being disqualifi'd; others have miscarried through a lazy indolent Temper,.. who after a great deal of Travel, quit the Advantages already gained, and when Patience was just stretching out her Hand, to help them over the laft Difficulty, their Resolution staggered, and they rolled down the Descent so fast, that good Fortune could never overtake them. Very heroic truly! but what Women are those who are close at their Heels? They are Grief, Pain, Despair, Ignominy and Ignorance; they are in a most hopeful Set of Company, said I. Now, when those scandalous Deserters return to Luxu-

ry and Leudnes, Inhabitants of the first Court, they plead the Insufficiency of Philosophy, in Defence of their infamous Apostacy, alledging the insupportable Fatigue she requires, before she can be attainable, without any satisfactory Reward for the infinite Toils they must undergo, whilst they can here live at Ease, and riot in a Round of continual Delights. And is this a Place in Reality that can afford such Scenes of Pleasure? If Drunkennes and Gluttony deserve the Name of Pleasure, here she is idolized, for sensual Satisfactions, common to Men with Brutes, have in their Esteem the Supremacy over all others. To be always brim full of Delicacies, and swim in Luxury, is, I must own, a most refined Piece of Epicurean Philosophy; but who are those Ladies with such an Air of Jollity and good Humour? These are Opinions who introduce those to Instruction who are travelling to the Virtues; and they are constantly employed in this Office, for when they have ushered in one Company, they instantly return to convey another; and they never fail extolling the happy Condition of those who have arrived at the Period of their Journey, which is a strong Incitement to others to follow. I did not imagine, said I, that Ladies of such Levity were

admitted, even in the most remote Circumstances, to any Fellowship with the Virtues. You are perfectly right, for Opinion is kept at such an awful Distance by Science, that she never dare so much as appear in her Presence; but as soon as she delivers up her Charge to Instruction, she goes back in Quest of new Comers: As Merchants, when they have unladed their Vessels, set Sail immediately and return freighted with another Cargo. I find an Accuracy in the Account you give of every Thing most surprizingly just; but you have not told us the particular Directions the superintending Spirit gives those who are setting out into Life: 'Tis in brief bravely to stand and maintain their Ground, and let no Pusillanimity ever seize them, or prevent them from surmounting whatever Impediments are thrown in their Way; and I earnestly recommend the same Lesson for your future Conduct, and that nothing may deter you from making a thorough Proficiency in a Life of Virtue. I will be as diffusive as possible upon this Subject, and not omit one Tittle in the Relation, in Hopes that it may produce in you suitable Fruits, if you shall preserve in your Memory but even a few of these Maxims to govern your Practice, which must unavoidably profit you,

unless you are shamefully unmindful of what you have heard. Here pointing with his Cane, he asked us if we saw that blind Woman standing upon a Globe, which he had before told us was Fortune. We replied that we did. The Genius warns every Body to place no Manner of Trust or Confidence in her Promises, and never to reckon any Thing properly their own that came from her, for it would never be of any long Duration; for, continues he, this Lady is so fickle and fluttering in her Humour, that the Favours conferred to-day, to-morrow she revokes; nay, every Man's own Observation will furnish him with innumerable Instances of the Inconstancy of Fortune; and since Resumptions are so very frequent in this Case, and that there is no Dependance on her Favours, the Genius advises all People not to hold their Happiness at the precarious Tenure of her bare Will and Pleasure, but take Things just as they fall out, and receive her Favours with the same Indifference they would resign them. This is the only Method to be safe against her Trifling, for she Acts all at Random, and in a perpetual Flux, without any View or Design. We should therefore never shew any Passion or Resentment at her Proceedings, which are intirely influenced by

by Chance. We must never therefore look upon her Bounties as Things we can call our own, nor behave like some gripping Bankers, who are highly transported with receiving Money, imagining they are to carry on their own Interest with it for ever ; but when it is drawn out again, we can perceive a heavy Weight hang upon their Brow, and that they are as much out of Humour, as if there was a real Injury done them, never reflecting at the same Time, that they are but Cashiers, intrusted with the Sum, upon Conditions of repaying it on Demand. These are some of the Instructions designed by the Genius to fortify Mens Minds, against the Assaults of Fortune, who presents all Sorts of Faces, now takes away what she had bestowed, and soon after perhaps restores it threefold ; and it is not improbable, but she may turn short again, and like an enraged Frantick, sweep away not only her own Favours, but every Thing they are possessed of, and leave them naked to the World. Upon these Considerations, the directing Spirit advises them to make the most of what they can get from Fortune, for as every Thing may serve to some Purpose, so may her Liberalities be instrumental to some noble End, which they are enjoin'd to set out instantly in quest of, and when

when once found, there will be no Need of rambling for further Happiness, for this will be an eternal Advantage. Where is this inexhaustible Mine of Felicity? Where, said I, are these fortunate Islands to be found? If he can once arrive safe at the Seat of Learning, replies my Instructor, she will open such hidden Treasures, that he may be perpetually enriching himself, and she never a Jot the poorer. But what excellent Qualities will her Bounties convey to him? They will furnish him with Knowledge, which will make him look into Things, and teach him to rate them according to their respective Value. Now it is of the last Consequence, to be able to pursue the right Ends of living, and to understand the true Purpose and Significancy of Life. This is a valuable Present indeed, and which he need not fear being recalled. These are the true Riches which will ever stick by him, and which he may travel with, without any Danger or Incumbrance, and even in a Shipwreck, may easily swim away with: and this is the Reason why the Genius is so very urgent with them, to be bold and resolute, pressing them to push forward as fast as they can, to reach the Goal, where they are to receive so inestimable a Reward; and when they are come up to those Ladies, who, I told you before,

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represented Pleasure and Intemperance, &c. they have positive Orders to pass them by, and enter into no Manner of Intimacy with them, nor to stop, tho' ever so short a Time, till they reach pretended Learning ; and here their Stay is to be of no Continuance, no longer than just what barely suffices for furnishing them with Conveniencies for their Journey, which they are no sooner equipt with, but they must set forward to the Seat of true Learning or Philosophy, with the utmost Expedition. These are the Directions of the Genius, and whoever either neglects or contemns them, will act in the Depth of his own Foolishness, and become miserably wretched beyond all Example. Thus, Gentlemen, have I fully explained to you the Mythology of the Picture, which I have closely examined, and explained in all its Divisions : But if any Thing occurs to you that requires Information, be so candid, pray, as to let me know it, and I shall most chearfully use my Endeavours to satisfy you. Without further Compliment, I shall make free, and lay hold of the Privilege you have been pleased in so obliging a Manner to grant us, for I must own to you, I don't clearly perceive what it is, that the Genius in particular directs to be received from pretended Learning, as the best Provision towards

towards a happy Life. They are Things, I can assure you, that may be of Service, by a proper Application of them. Pray, Sir, said I, what are those Things that may be of such mighty Advantage? An Acquaintance with all the Parts of polite Literature, which is not only the most agreeable Amusement, but will also enlarge the Mind, and furnish it with a new Set of Ideas, both salutary and refreshing, and brighten the misty Prospects, dispel the heavy Fogs, scour the Rust off the Soul ; and, as *Plato* has very well observed, will serve as a Bridle to check the intemperate Sallies of ungovernable Youth, and keep off the Attacks of Immorality, to which an idle Person is intirely open and exposed. Is there an absolute Necessity of touching upon this charming Coast, and taste of its Delights, in order to arrive at the Seat of true Learning ? It is by no Means essential, yet I cannot help saying, that it will bring its Advantages with it, as it will be instrumental, in some Respects, to imbellish the Understanding, and illuminate the Mind by some improving Reflections ; but this will amount to little more than a few loose superficial Thoughts and wild Ideas, which may serve for an outward Adorning ; but as to the inward Man, the subduing of

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sensual Passions, despising unlawful Pleasures, with an intire moral Rectitude in all his Actions ; these, I say, are not to be drawn out of this Fountain. Do you say then, that polite Literature contributes nothing to moral Improvement ? Permit me, Sir, to give it as my humble Opinion, that the liberal Sciences signify little, as to that Point, but I will readily allow, at the same Time, they are not without their peculiar Excellency. To illustrate the Matter : Though we may understand a Foreigner by the Help of an Interpreter, yet surely it will not be amiss to learn the Language ourselves. Thus you see Probity is attainable, without the Help of Education. But, says I, do you think Scholars are not in a fairer Way of making Advances towards Virtue, and of gaining the Point, than the illiterate Vulgar ? It does not appear to me that they are, for Theory and Practice are two distinct Things, and Men of the finest Speculations are often guilty of the most shameful Enormities, notwithstanding the natural Repugnance that may seem between them : So that let them boast ever so much of the superlative Power of this Philosophy ; it shrinks when put to the Trial ; for the Bias of the Mind leans still towards Vice, and revolts from the most rigid Doctrine to the loosest

Principles, as if Men were intirely ignorant of the Nature of Good and Evil. Tho' a Man may have his Head filled with abundance of refined Notions, so that he be able to teach the Scieaces all round, yet notwithstanding, how frequently do we see this very fine Gentleman come reeling out of common Brothels, a mere effeminate Fop, perhaps a Fordid covetous Niggard, a tricking Knave, or an infamous Traitor? And how many Men of admirable Parts are liable to these scandalous Imputations, who live quite contrary to what they profess, and are such contemptible Wretches, that they even dishonour human Nature? What I have here said may be sufficient to convince you of the palpable Inconsistency of Practice and Pretension. This is really Truth and Nature, drawn with a very impartial Pencil; and I flatter my self that you look upon it as an unreasonable Fancy, is it because a Man's Memory is furnished with a few shining Sentences? He must consequently be a Man of strict Morals, and that nothing deserves the Honour of a Competition with him. I must confess, says I, when one looks nicely into the Merits of the Cause, polite Literature loses the Advantages it seemed to have upon a superficial View; and as you have stated the Case, it must intirely disclaim

claim all Manner of Preheminence. But what is the Reason then these Gentlemen are lodged in the second Court, just on this Side the Pale of true Knowledge? This Vicinity, though it seems to plead with some Colour in Favour of your former Opinion, I shall easily refute and convince you, that it is productive of no real Advantage. I must inform you, true Knowledge frequently makes Profelytes of the most abandoned Libertines, who pass immediately from the lowest Degree of Immorality, to the highest Pitch of Virtue, and without ever paying a Visit to these Gentlemen in the middle Court, they are translated from the last Court to the first. I cannot see, says I, that those fine educated Gentlemen stand in any Degree of Preference above the common Herd of Mankind. This must be owing to a lazy Indolence, or an untoward Disposition to learn the proper Lessons of their Duty; for if they set about it with Warmth and Inclination, they would proportion their Application to the Dignity and Importance of the Thing, and would not be hurried on in these vain Pursuits, at this unaccountable Rate, and neglect those more valuable Blessings in their Power. How so, said I? Because those Gentlemen in the second Court, proud of a liberal Education,

on, suffer their Vanity to impose upon them so vastly, that they flatter themselves they know all they are ignorant of, and take no more Pains with themselves; for Conceit begets Ignorance as naturally, as one Error does another; and thus they neglect any further Improvement, Rambling in Impertinence, floating in Uncertainties, flourishing and beating the Air with petty Amusements, never once forming a true Judgment on Things, and incapable of discovering the Imperfections and Infirmities of Nature. You may observe, Opinion makes frequent Incursions out of the first Court into this, which plainly demonstrates them under the same Predicament with the Generality of Mankind, unless they leave their Follies behind them by the Aid of proper Reflection, and become thoroughly convinced, that they have been carried away by false Appearances, and are determined to sit in Judgment upon themselves, without any partial Favour to the least Foible, Levity or Indecorum, putting their future Conduct under proper Regulations, and walking through the whole Course of their Lives, by the Rules of Philosophy in the strictest Sense. I hope, Gentlemen, says he, that you will always lodge this Discourse faithfully in your Memory, and that the

ections will have due Force on your Minds, and that you will not defer one Moment the Beginning to live according to the Rules of right Reason, which these Observations will sufficiently enable you to do. You must frequently recollect your Memory, and stand the Reproaches of your Mind, upon your past Errors, and triumph over them by a future Alteration of Conduct. All other Learning, but what tends to this laudable End, is mere trifling and fruitless. Sir, said I, we shall endeavour to produce the happy Fruits of your Instructions, by continual Advances in the Improvement of all our better Faculties, agreeable to your generous Incitement, which we will constantly cherish in our Minds. But I cannot hinder expressing my Impatience, to know why the common Liberalities of Fortune, such as Life, Health, Riches, Fame, Posterity, Victory, &c. why these, I say, are not to be accounted good, and why the contrary to these can be maintained to be no Evil. This appears to me a strange Paradox, and does not a little perplex me. I should be under the highest Obligation to you, if you will condescend to explain this Riddle, which seems so very inexplicable, according to the confused Notions I conceive of the Matter. I will endeavour to set you right in this Point; there-

fore I shall propose a few Questions to you, and I expect that you will deliver your Sentiments with Candour. I promise you, Sir, said I, to speak my Mind very freely. Suppose then a Person leads a profligate vicious Life, do you account Life an Advantage in such a Case? I should much rather deem it the greatest Disadvantage. The bare Privilege of living without other Considerations, you must allow then carries no intrinsick Value with it; therefore the Advantage or Disadvantage arises from the Difference in the internal Qualities of the Mind, as they are more or less inclined to Virtue or Vice. What do you say, that Life is at the same Time a Happiness and a Misfortune? I do affirm it to be so precisely. Have a care, Sir, said I, for I am almost satisfied that you advance a self-evident Absurdity, it being a Contradiction in Terms to say, that the same numerical Thing should be both good and bad; and consequently must be supposed to be profitable and prejudicial, and at once the Object of Desire and Aversion. That is indeed, replies he, a most wild extravagant Chimera. Life is undoubtedly a very grievous Detriment to those who abuse the Blessings of it, but it does not follow from hence, that Life in it self can be a real Mischief. I plainly perceive, said I, that there is a wide Difference in

strict Propriety of Speech, between Life considered barely in the Abstract, and as it only signifies Existence, and when it is taken in its utmost Sense, with Regard to its Ends and Relations, and the Perfections or Imperfections of its Offices, restrained within their natural Limits, or let run riotously without Controul. You grant me then, I find, that Life, in the simple Sense of Being, is neither Good nor Evil ; but as the Scene of Action lies, it creates a real Utility, or a real Disadvantage, for otherwise the Virtuous and the Wicked would be indiscriminately miserable alike, as they equally enjoy the Privilege of Life. Your Reasoning, Sir, said I, is so very just and particularly convincing, that you perfectly command Assent. As Life, continues he, is common to good and bad Men, it must doubtless be a Thing perfectly indifferent, in its own Nature, and its respective Value must turn upon the Use that is made of it, for Significancy is the proper Test of its Qualities, determinable by its rational Capacity : A Surgeon, for Instance, must not have those Praises paid merely to his Profession, that are only due to his Merit, for tho' lancing and cauterizing are serviceable, if they are performed seasonably, and with Dexterity, in Cases absolutely necessary, yet to a Man in a sound Habit of Body, such Operations would be destruc-

tive of the Health already confirmed. The Case is exactly the same, in the Œconomy and Conduct of Life, the Performance of all our Actions should be nicely accommodated, both to Time and Place, so that nothing be unseasonable or improper. I shall now beg Leave to put another Question to you ; whether would you chuse to live with Ignominy, or die with Glory ? Good Gods ! who could hesitate one Moment, to know on which Side the Verdict ought to be given, when Infamy and Honour are placed in opposite Scales ? This, Sir, said he, is true Fortitude and Nobleness of Mind ; and this Inference, from Premises fairly and honestly deducible, plainly concludes, that Death is often more eligible than Life, and therefore nothing is evil in it self ; for as it falls in with the Intention of Nature, Dying certainly carries no moral Turpitude with it precisely taken ; and nothing makes it an Evil, but the scandalous Circumstances attending it. 'Tis as visible to me as the Light, said I, and all Objections intirely vanish ; by the same Parity of Reason, continues he, we may prove, with Reference to Health and Diseases, that the former is sometimes a Misfortune, as frequent Events are undoubted on its Side, to enforce so unacceptable a Conclusion. What you say is very

very defensible, for we are furnished with many Examples, to evince us of the various Disasters Men have run into, by the Encouragement of a vigorous Constitution, which it were happy for them, if they might have avoided, even at the Expence of their Health. Let us now proceed, says our generous Instructor, to scrutinize those considerable Pretensions to Advantage, that Riches seem to lay so incontestible a Claim to; and if I am not very much mistaken, it will require no great Strength of Argument to manifest, that those Things so much valued are miserably empty and insignificant; and where is the Necessity of combating by great Dint of Reasoning what is plain Matter of Fact, proved by innumerable Instances, for nothing is more common, than to see Grandeur with all its glittering Parade of Equipage belong to some scandalous Posseffor, whose Magnificence and Figure serves only to set his Insignificancy in the most conspicuous Point of Light? I cannot help feeling my self, I must own to you, said I, most sensibly touched with a conscious Pity for those miserable Wretches. I perceive then by this, that it is apparent to you, that Riches avail nothing towards the Advancement of Prudence, or establish a right Set of Principles

ciples for promoting Virtue and Happiness. It seems to me, that Riches run perfectly counter to these, and are rather Incentives to Vice, than conducive to Virtue ; or how could it possibly happen, that such a general Depravation of Morals, should be always an inseparable Companion with, and ever imputable to the Rich. You grant me then by your own Concession, that Affluence of Fortune contributes nothing towards furnishing a Man with any good Qualities. I acquiesce intirely in all you say. The nice Criterion or Touch-stone of the intrinsic Value of any Thing is its answering the End of our being in the Improvement of Virtue and Happiness, to the attaining of those Perfections, Riches proves no ways serviceable ; it necessarily follows, that they bring no real Advantage to the Owners, but being unattended by Virtue, must be only supplemental to the gratifying vicious Inclinations. How then can that Thing be absolutely good, that in some Cases a Man had much better be without ? Thus it is demonstrated, that Riches applied to the Pageantry of Life, whose Lustre is only in the Imagination, are vastly prejudicial ; but when put under the Direction of Reason, may prove, I as readily grant you, of very great Advantage. You must always remember then, that

that Riches are indifferent in themselves, and only good or bad for us, accordingly as we use them : In the Hands of a Man of Probity and Discretion, highly advantageous, in the Hands of an unthinking Profligate, they are like an ill-sheathed Knife, that will cut its Owner. To bring this to an Issue, the over-rating of these Things is the Occasion of all the Irregularities that disturb the Peace and Order of the World, and bring such an Inundation of Miseries upon Mankind, vainly and inconsiderately fancying, that the Felicity of Life intirely depends upon being furnished with Materials for Pleasure, which they are so violent in the Pursuit of, that they stick at no Villainy for the Purchase ; and all this Mischief is occasioned for Want of a right Notion of what is really good. Thus, my dear *Isabella*, the sage Dervise finished the wise Greek's Allegory on human Life ; though his Delineation be a little perplexed, and the Colours not disposed of every where to the best Advantage ; yet there is something in the whole that may give this Instruction as well as Entertainment ; which that you may never want, shall be the earnest Prayer of thy ancient Mother,

Constantinople the 25th
Day of the 8th Moon.

SELIMA.

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An Alphabetical INDEX

Of the principal Matters in both Volumes.

A.

Angel, Meaning of the Word, and the Opinion of the *Turks* relating to them. Vol. 1. let. 1. pag. 3. The Opinion of the *Platonists* and eastern Philosophers. V. 1. let. 4. pag. 31.

Ajambaba, the Head of the Sect of the *Dervises*. A Question stated by him to Caliph *Hali*, V. 1. l. 3. p. 18. His Answer and Discourse on the Nature and Immortality of the Soul, *ib.* 19.

Alcoran, is the Book of the Revelation of the Prophet *Mahomet*. V. 1. l. 3. p. 18.

Action Moral, what it is. V. 1. l. 5. p. 39.

Abrokomar, his Story in Illustration of the Evil of Pride. V. 1. l. 6. p. 45.

Anger, a Definition of it. V. 1. l. 7. p. 48. The chief Ingredient in false Courage. V. 2. l. 27. p. 108.

Ali Beg of Bender, his Story in Illustration of the Nature and Mischiefs of Envy. V. 1. l. 7. p. 53.

Ambition, a Discourse on it. V. 1. l. 8. p. 57. to 61. *Rochefoucault's* Opinion of it, *ib.* 58.

Aga, what it is. V. 1. l. 17. p. 123.

B.

Basha, The Meaning of the Term. V. 1. l. 2. p. 9.

Bedriden, a Dervise, whose Conversations with *Selima* are the Subject of the Letters. His Character. V. 1. l. 2. p. 10. His Discourse on the Being and Attributes of God. V. 1. l. p. 2. 12. to 17. His Discourse on the Nature of the human Soul. V. 1. l. 3. p. 17. to 23. On the natural Evidence of Virtue and Vice. V. 1. l. 4. p. 23. On Sensation, and its Effects upon the human Mind, V. 1. l. 5. p. 36. to 41. On Pride. V. 1.

I N D E X.

V. 1. l. 6. p. 42. to 47. On Anger and Envy.
V. 1. l. 7. p. 48. to 57. On Ambition and
Meanness. V. 1. l. 8. p. 57. to 61. On In-
gratitude and Inhumanity. V. 1. l. 9. p. 61. to
68. On our Duty to Mankind. V. 1. l. 10.
p. 68. and l. 11. 74. to 80. On Prudence.
V. 1. l. 13. p. 97. to 107. On the same Sub-
ject as applicable to particular Persons and Cir-
cumstances V. 1. l. 14. p. 107 to 111. On the
the same with Regard to the Government of the
Passions. V. 1. l. 15. p. 111. to 116. On
Justice V. 1. l. 16. p. 116. to 121. On Love in
general. V. 1. l. 17. p. 121. to 139. On
Friendship or social Love. V. 1. l. 18. p. 139.
On the Source of Friendship and Self-Love.
V. 2. l. 19. p. 1. to p. 19. On true Pa-
triotism. V. 2. l. 20. p. 20. to 33. On
modern Patriotism. V. 2. l. 21. p. 33. On
Fidelity and Truth. V. 2. l. 22. p. 50. to 56.
On the relative Duties. V. 2. l. 23. p. 56. to 63.
On Fortitude introduced by the Character of the
young Sophi of *Perfia*. V. 2. l. 24. p. 63. to 74.
His Description of that Virtue, V. 2. from Page
74 to 113. in Letters 25. 26. and 27. Of Mode-
ration, V. 2. l. 28. p. 113. to 118.

Benevolence defined. V. 2. l. 20. p. 27.

Bubamar, his Character in Illustration of the Diffe-
rence betwixt Prudence and Craft. V. 1. l. 13.
p. 97.

C

Chance, what it is. V. 1. l. 2. p. 12.

Caliph, what it signifies. V. 1. l. 3. p. 17.

Craft, wherein it differs from Prudence illustrated by
the Character of *Bubamar*. V. 1. l. 13. p. 97.

Compassion defined. V. 2. l. 20. p. 30.

Courage, see the several Species of it under the Term
Fortitude.

D.

Dervise, the Original of the Word, and their Of-
fice. V. 1. l. 1. p. 3. *Denial*,

I N D E X.

Denial Self. See *Self-Love.*

Duties, relative, their Nature and Use. V. 2.
1. 23. 56.

E.

Eternal and infinite used as synonymous Terms.
V. 1. 1. 2. p. 13.

Envy, a Definition of it. V. 1. 1. 7. p. 52. Its De-
formity illustrated in the Story of *Ali Beg* of Ben-
der. *ib.* 53.

Evils natural, the proper Use of them. V. 2.
1. 26. p. 96. imaginary, *ib.*

F.

Friendship, a general Description of it. V. 1. 1. 18.
p. 139. The Effects of it illustrated in the History
of *Osmin* and *Omer*. V. 1. 1. 18. p. *ib.* Its Source
Self-Love, V. 2. 1. 19. p. 1. and its End Self-Hap-
piness. *ib.*

Fidelity, a Discourse on it. V. 2. 1. 22. p. 50.

Fortitude, the Description of that Virtue introduced
by the History of the young *Sophi* of *Persia*, V. 2.
1. 24, 25, 26, 27. from p. 63. to 113. is not
inherent. Its high Birth, p. 75. a Definition of the
Term, p. 78. is never to be met with in a truly vi-
cious Character. It takes its Rise from a just
Knowledge of our selves, and of Mankind, p. 78.
and 79. This Knowledge of himself teaches him
to prefer mental to sensual Pleasure, p. 80. and of
Consequence the Exercise of the social Virtues his
chief Delight, *ib.* This Affection may be mea-
sured by the Degree of Conquest obtained over
the Passions, and the Benevolence of which a Man
is posses'd, *ib.* may be practised in all Stations of
Life. 81. Trial proves its Existence and Degree,
but does not beget it, *ib.* *Selima's* Reflection upon
the general Description, p. 83. Fortitude consid-
ered in Adversity, p. 86. applied to the Character
of the banished *Sophi*, p. 87. A Counterfeit of it
flowing from an Insensibility of Nature, p. 92.
and another owing to Insensibility of Conscience,

I N D E X.

p. 94. The Marks of Heroism in Prosperity. p. 99.
A general Division of prosperous Fortitude, p. 100
It consists in a Moderation of all the Passions, and
a judicious Application of all our Faculties to their
proper Uses. p. 101. Does not consist in un-
active Indolence, *ib.* Fortitude in high Life,
p. 102. is best displayed in Time of publick
Danger, p. 103. is above the Effects of popular
Clamour, *ib.* is as necessary in the Cabinet as in
the Field. p. 105. Courage or Military Forti-
tude described. 106. An irrational Contem of
Death, no Mark of true Courage. p. 107. Ex-
amining the Danger and Value of an Action, no
Cowardise. *ib.* The Courage of *Charles the 12th*
of a superior Kind, *ib.* Anger and Pride, the
chief Ingredients in this bastard Courage, p. 109.
Of habitual Courage, p. 110. Of constitutional
Courage, p. 111. Of artificial Courage, *ib.* Phi-
losophick Courage, p. 112. Of Fortitude in low
Life, and its Marks, *ib.*

G.

God, A Definition of the Term. V. 1. l. 2. p. 11.
is the Source of Truth, *ib.* is the Lord of Na-
ture, Chance; and Necessity, *ib.* p. 12. his Being
demonstrated, *ib.* p. 13. is self-existent, and inde-
pendent. *ib.* his Eternity demonstrated, *ib.* p. 14. is
incomprehensible, *ib.* his Perfection demon-
strated, *ib.* his Omnipresence defined and pro-
ved, *ibid.* The Unity of the Godhead demon-
strated, *ib.* p. 15. is Creator of the Universe,
p. 16. and from thence challenges religious Wor-
ship, *ib.* is a Spirit, *ib.* is unchangeable, *ib.* p. 15.
his Wisdom, Goodness and Knowledge proved,
from the Works of his Creation, *ib.* p. 16.

Genii, the *Turkis* Opinion of them, with that of the
Platonists, and other eastern Philosophers. V. 1.
l. 4. p. 31. l. 5. 41.

Hali, Caliph, his Discourse on the Nature of the Soul,
V. 1. l. 3. p. 19 to, 23.

Haram,

I N D E X.

Haram, what it is, V. 1. l. 13. p. 103.

Imam, the Nature of their Office among the *Turks*, V. 1. l. 2. p. 10.

Immutability of the Deity asserted, V. 1. l. 2. p. 15.

Inquietude, a Principle in the Soul, which stands in the Middle, between Pleasure, Pain, and the Passions. V. 1. l. 5. p. 38. A Definition of the Term, *ib.* Fear deduced from it, *ib.* Hope derived from it, *ib.*

Justice, a Definition of the Term, and a Discourse on the Nature of that Virtue. V. 1. l. 16. p. 116. Force and Law the two great Props of this Virtue, *ib.* Society cannot subsist without, *ib.* 118. The Division of communicative Justice, *ib.* 119. The Practice of Justice sufficient to intitle a Man to the Appellation of Good, *ib.* 121.

Tanizaries, an Account of them. V. 1. l. 17. p. 123.

K.

Knowledge, how communicated to the Mind. V. 1. l. 4. p. 25.

Knights of St. John, an Account of that Order, V. 1. l. 17. p. 137.

L.

Liberty, a Definition of it, V. 1. l. 4. p. 29.

Love, a general Definition of it, V. 1. l. 17. p. 122. has three Sources, from Nature, Virtue, and Interest, *ib.* These three sometimes coincide, but are oftner separate, *ib.* and Love is most pure when the two first only enter into the Composition, *ib.* this illustrated by the History of Sahi-Beg, V. 1. l. 17. p. 123. to 137. Of Social Love. See *Friendship*.

Self-Love, a Definition of it, V. 2. l. 19. p. 5. That Definition illustrated, *ib.* Self-Love first made Man social, *ib.* And to preserve Society it became necessary to practise Self-Denial, *ib.* Self-Denial defined, *ib.* Self-Denial without regard to Pleasure a mere Chimera, *ib.* 7. if forced, no moral

I N D E X.

ral Affection, or founded upon Fear, *ib.* The mean Opinion we conceive of Self-Love accounted for, *ib.* 8. Such Degrees of Self-Love as interferes with the Peace of the Community discouraged, *ib.* 9. Pride derived from Self-Love, and the Reason we despise it in every one but ourselves, *ib.* Self-Love the Source of Vanity, *ib.* 10. Of the Love of Money, *ib.* Reason why the Miser is more hated than any other, *ib.* The Love of Money generally meant by Self-Love, and that the Reason we abhor the Character, *ib.* 11. When Selfishness does not employ the Love of Money, we find less odious Epithets for it, such as Ambition, *ib.* 12. Self-Love, the Patriot, first Principle, *ib.* Reason why that Character is more amiable than any other produced by Self-Love, *ib.* 13. The Difference between the Patriot and the Miser with respect to their End in View, *ib.* An Objection to the Principle of Self-Love stated and answered, *ib.* 17. When Self-Love becomes criminal, V. 2. l. 20. p. 22.

M.

Musti, a Description of his Office, V. 1. l. 1. p. 1. *Molocks*, their Office among the *Turks*, V. 1. l. 2. p. 10.

Mussulman, its Signification among the *Turks*, V. 1. l. 1. p. 8.

Matter, defined, V. 1. l. 3. p. 20.

Money, Love thereof proceeds from Self-Love, V. 2. l. 19. p. 10. Why held in such Disrepute, *ib.* Is mistaken for Self-Love in general, *ib.* 11. Difference between the Miser and Patriot in respect to their Ends in View, *ib.* 13.

Magnanimity. See *Fortitude*.

Moderation, V. 2. l. 28. p. 113. to 118.

N.

Nature, a Definition of the Term, V. 1. l. 2. p. 12.

Necessity, a Definition of it, differs from Constraint, V. 1. l. 2. p. 12.

Nicar,

I N D E X:

Nicar, the punishing Angel among the Mahometans, V. 1. l. 7. p. 53.

O.

Omnipresence of the Deity demonstrated, V. 1. l. 2. p. 14.

Obligations, the several Sorts, V. 1. l. 4. p. 27.

Omer and *Osmi*, their Story in Illustration of Friendship, V. 1. l. 18.

P.

Prophet, the Turkish Opinion of their Prophets, V. 1. l. 1. p. 3.

Perfection of the Deity demonstrated, V. 1. l. 2. p. 14.

Pain or *Pleasure*, the Principles by which they are governed, V. 1. l. 4. p. 25. Perception of them, the first Ideas the Soul is furnished with, *ib.* And according to their Measure a Thing is demonstrated good or bad, *ib.*

Passions, what they are properly, V. 1. l. 4. p. 29. Are the elder Brothers of Reason, *ib.* Depend in a secondary Way on Pleasure and Pain, V. 1. l. 5. p. 37.

Providence, supposed to interfere with Free-will, and on what the Notion is founded, V. 1. l. 4. p. 30.

Pride, the Nature of it, V. 1. l. 6. p. 42. Its deformity illustrated by the Story of *Abrokamar*, *ib.* Is derived from Self-Love, and the Reason why so much hated, V. 2. l. 19. p. 1. &c. Is an ingredient in false Courage, V. 2. l. 27. p. 108.

Prudence, a Discourse on it, V. 1. l. 13. p. 97. The Difference betwixt it and Craft illustrated by the Story of *Bubamar*, *ib.* Another Discourse relating to private Persons in particular Circumstances, V. 1. l. 14. p. 107. Another applicable to the Government and Exercise of the Passions, V. 1. l. 15. p. 111.

Patriotism, founded on Self-Love, V. 2. l. 19. p. 12. Why that Character is so much adored, *ib.* 13.

The Difference between it and *Ayarice*, *ib.* Real Patriotism

K N I D I E X.

Patriotism defined, V. 2. 1. 20. p. 23. Is rarely to be met with among Mankind, *ib.* 24. Is often counterfeited, *ib.* 25. Takes its Rise from Benevolence, *ib.* 27. The Difference betwixt the two Affections, *ib.* 28. Patriotism likewise derived from Pity, *ib.* 30. Source of Pity, *ib.* Modern Patriotism described, V. 2. 1. 21. p. 33. How that counterfeit Spirit supplies the Place of true publick Spirit through all the Affairs of Life, *ib.* Pride, Ambition, and Avarice, are the principal Springs of Action in the counterfeit Patriot, *ib.* This Assertion illustrated by the Character of the *Czar* of Muscovy and *Charles XII.* *ib.* Application of the Discourse on Patriotism to young *Ali.* *ib.*

R.

Resurrection, the Turkish Notion of it, V. 1. 1. 3. p. 20.

Reason, an allegorical Description of it, V. 1. 1. 1. p. 7. A Definition of the Term, V. 1. 1. 4. p. 28.

S.

Seraglio, the Etymology of the Word, and a Description of that of the Grand Signior, V. 1. 1. 1. p. 2.

Spirit, answer to the Objection, that an immaterial Spirit cannot move Matter, V. 1. 1. 2. p. 16.

Sultan, what it signifies among the *Turks*, V. 1. 1. 3. p. 17.

Soul, a Definition of the Term, V. 1. 1. 3. p. 19. There are three Kinds of Souls, the Vegetative, the Sensitive, and the Rational or Human Soul, *ib.* This last is different from the Body, *ib.* Is not Self-Existent but a dependent immaterial Substance, *ib.* 20. Its Power over the Body, *ib.* 21. Its Immortality asserted, *ib.* From whence is deduced the Doctrine of Rewards and Punishments, *ib.* 22. Wherein they differ from other Spirits, V. 1. 1. 4. p. 24.

Selection,

I N D E X.

Sensation, Seal thereof, V. 1. l. 4. p. 25. *Sensations* internal; what they are, V. 1. l. 5. p. 36. All the Passions are derived from it, V. 1. l. 5. p. 37. *Society*, what it is, how necessary to the Happiness of Mankind, illustrated in the Speech of *Abdalah* his Son, V. 1. l. 10, 11. p. 68 to 80. Its necessity taught by Self-Love, V. 2. l. 19. p. 1. *Sophi of Persia*, original of the Title, V. 1. l. 13. p. 103. *Sabi-Beg*, his Story in Illustration of virtuous Love, V. 1. l. 17. p. 123.

Sebes, a Theban Philosopher, his Allegory of Life, V. 2. l. 29. p. 118. to the End.

T.
Truth, Plato's Opinion of it, V. 1. l. 2. p. 11. *Turks*, their Opinion of Angels, V. 1. l. 1. p. 3. Of Prophets, *ib.*

V.
Virtue, a synonymous Term with Good, Right, &c. V. 1. l. 4. p. 24. The natural Evidence of Virtue and Vice, *ib.* 24. to 35.

Vanity, derived from Self-Love, V. 2. l. 19. p. 10. *Vice*, an allegorical Description of it, V. 1. l. 1. p. 4.

Vision, *Selima's*, relating to her Daughter *Isabella*, which gives Rise to the Letters of the Dervise, explanatory of Free-Will and Providence, V. 1. l. 4. p. 31. Of *Selima* representing the various Stages of Life, V. 1. l. 12. p. 80. to 97.

Vizier Grand, is Prime Minister or Deputy to the Grand Signior, V. 1. l. 17. p. 122.

U.
Unity of the Godhead demonstrated, V. 1. l. 2. p. 15.

W.
Will, a Definition of it, V. 1. l. 4. p. 29. Free-Will, the Dervise's Notion of it explained by a Vision, V. 1. l. 4. p. 30. to 35.



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